

# Labor Age

## THE FOLLY OF NON-PARTISAN POLITICS

### HOW TO ORGANIZE

LOUIS F. BUDENZ

SEPTEMBER, 1929

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# Labor Age

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# Following the Fight

## With Comment Thereon

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

### OUR AIM:

To Educate the Unorganized—To Stimulate the Organized  
To Unity, Militancy and Intelligent Action.

## Make Labor Day Live!

### *Halt Hat-in-Hand Policy and Recover Lost Prestige*

ON this Labor Day in 1929, where does American Labor stand? What is its position in the thousands of communities where working folks live? While A. F. of L. officials talk in large terms of the present policies of the Movement, hob-nob with militarists and kow-tow to shoddy politicians, what is actually thought of trade unionism through these United States?

We can turn to page 77 of "MIDDLETOWN" and learn something about that. There we read:

"Labor Day, a great day in the nineties, is today barely noticed."

Had the authors chosen to go a bit further, they might have added:

"Where it is celebrated at all, it is generally pre-empted by some small merchants association or civic improvement club, which hits upon it as an occasion to raise a little money." It has been captured, in this cheap fashion, by those out of sympathy with the organization of the workers.

But the Middletown researchers do give us an etching of the decline of this festival of the toilers, which is symbolic of the slump in power of Organized Labor. The history of Labor Day in Middletown is compressed into this nutshell:

"In 1891 the entire city participated in the first Labor Day celebration—commencing at 4 a. m. with an 'artillery signal of forty-four rounds' and proceeding throughout a crowded day of bands, parades, greased pole, bicycle races in the street, pie-eating contest, reading of Declaration of Independence, two orations, greased pig, baseball, dancing all day, to a grand finale of fireworks at the fair grounds. But today the parade has been abandoned entirely. In 1923 an effort was made to draw a crowd to hear a speaker, free ice cream being used as an inducement, but in 1924 no ceremonies were even attempted."

So with the movement itself in Middletown. "By the early nineties, Middletown had become 'one of the best organized cities in the United

States.'" Unionism was commented upon favorably by the newspapers then, time after time. A Workingmen's Library existed, and the unions absorbed much of the social life of the workers. Today it is different. "According to the secretary of one national union, 'the organized labor movement in Middletown does not compare with that of 1890 as one to one hundred.' The city's civic clubs boast of its being an 'open shop town.'" The workers have no groups through which they can gain self-expression or economic power, while the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and other like clubs of the business class have become dominant in the community. The newspapers allude to unionism but rarely, and then in a tone of contempt.

Thus have Labor Day and the local labor bodies fallen from their former high estates. The machine has helped that; strike after strike has been lost through the introduction of the machine. The auto has contributed its share; it has taken men and women away from union meetings. The scattering of the working populations away from the vicinity of the mill or factory in which they work has done its part toward this outcome. But above these things and beyond them has been the failure of the American Federation of Labor, the real source of expression for the workers, to adjust itself to the new regime. While the manufacturer has moved forward by leaps and bounds, as the machine in his grasp has pushed him forward to money and power, the Labor Movement has lagged behind. It has allowed itself to be lost in a mass of Things that Used to Be. With mouth wide open, it has stood with hat in hand, asking for the crumbs and getting precious little even of them. With merger upon merger on foot in the industrial world, it has continued to battle over jurisdictions and to refuse to speed industrial unionism. With politics openly and notoriously in the hands of the Open Shoppers, Tariff Grafters and Grundy-Mellonites, it has gone on playing the jester to the old parties' kingship.



We do not call for Jeremiads in looking at these cold facts on Labor Day and the Labor Movement. We call for a new life. We call for a demand on Labor's part that it be Something. We say that Industrial Unionism must come, that Independent Political Action must come, and that the Movement must equip itself with the spirit which will tell political bosses and Open Shoppers to "Go to Hell," occasionally. Labor Day is all but dead in 1929; we ask that Lazarus be raised up and made to live.

## RESURRECTION IN MIDDLETOWN

**H**OW can the union gospel be brought back to Middletown?

Sorely it is needed. A great void exists, unfilled by aimless auto rides and irregular nips of Prohibition hooch. The Chamber of Commerce—Open Shop world-view has left the worker flat. Why does he work so hard? To keep from losing the job, which has become his "all"; scarcely to go forward. The hope for "steady work" has become the sole thirst and hunger of his life. He is no longer the important factor in community life that he was in Knights of Labor and early A. F. of L. days. He has evolved into a beggar, whining for the right to exist past 40 years of age. What shall we do about it?

A little thought will help to point the way to the re-awakening of our thousand Middletowns. The deadly propaganda of the anti-union forces, draping the flag about it in "American Plan" and other like slobbery, must be hit in the head. The "American Plan" must be shown to be un-American; the "Open Shop," to be closed to union men. We can take a pointer from these enemies of ours. And here is the way that we can go about it:

1. Issue a free four-page paper to every home in the community, as a regular part of the organizing campaign.

2. In its pages, appeal in terms of the America of Freedom—the America of Thomas Paine, Jefferson, Garrison and Phillips—to the manhood and womanhood of the workers and to the sense of decency of the community as a whole.

3. Get statements in the local newspapers, showing the value of unionism—and create news by meetings, arrests at mill gates, speeches in the public square, etc., after the initial education of the community has begun through the free labor paper.

4. Put the union battle into local politics, in a self-assertive manner—not only to show the power of unionism, but also to get publicity, which will come quickly where political figures are involved. Don't say "Please" and "May We" to the local politicians but in a firm and diplomatic way put them on the defensive. They are largely the tools of the Open Shoppers, after such a long reign of Labor Apathy.

5. Think in terms of the local workers, particu-

larly the young. Show them that this is a new gospel, with an old meaning. Take them as they are, with their local limitations and inhibitions, and talk to them in their own "tongue."

To put it briefly, unionism must use the great educational weapon of publicity. It must put money into these community educational ventures. Precious little money it will cost compared to the amounts poured out in haphazard organization efforts. To make the cost lighter, several international unions might co-operate in the campaign—in a city where they both need further organization. Or, the State Federation might go in for this thing, in alliance with certain wide-awake internationals. Regardless of how the cost is met, it is a thing that must be done.

## AUTO AND AIRCRAFT CHALLENGE

**P**ATERSON, New Jersey, might well be visited in the course of our Labor Day thoughts on energizing the union crusade.

There is something there of particular interest—a large plant of the Wright Aeronautical Corporation.

"Silk City" manufacturers and merchants are much worked up over the possibility of Paterson becoming, to some degree, an "Airway City." This fantasy causes them to indulge in all sorts of concessions to the Wright company—at the expense of the city as a whole, of course. And what has become of it, so far as the laboring classes are concerned?

The initial policy of the Wright corporation was to hire men at 30 to 40 cents per hour, for the making of airplanes. Outsiders were given preference. The Paterson wage scale in other occupations was scarcely helped thereby. But now, the outsiders are getting it in the neck, to explain the process graphically. In turn, they are being cast aside, to make way for women. Paterson finds a great number of these invaders now thrown on the streets, to complicate the unemployment problem.

The women in this case are taken on for only one purpose—to cut wages still lower. As 30 to 40 cents per hour is scarcely a healthy wage, imagination can tell you that the wages to be paid now are below all decent proportions.

Unionism must get busy here. That is what this development signifies. Aircraft manufacturers can more than "stand" the union message. They are parts of a growing industry, which will eventually become basic. They are highly merged, and are already "sweatshops" of menacing import. They are linked up with the big automobile concerns as our great and growing industrial citadels. Transportation is always the foundation industry in every age. And this is the Age of the Auto and the Airship.

We must organize both—but not with one-hoss-shay methods.



# The Folly of Non-Partisan Politics

## Why We Need a Labor Party

By A. J. MUSTE

THE whole world was profoundly stirred by the victory of the British Labor Party in the elections last Spring, as a result of which a labor government is in charge of the greatest empire that has ever existed. The workers of America, including the members of the American Federation of Labor, were also deeply impressed.

When asked whether the workers in the United States will follow the British example and organize an independent party of labor here, A. F. of L. leaders still answer no, and stand by the so-called non-partisan policy under which the A. F. of L. and its affiliated organizations endorse or oppose for election to legislative, executive and judicial positions candidates of the Republican or the Democratic party, who by their votes on measures of interest to labor, for example, have seemed to show a friendly or unfriendly disposition toward the labor movement.

It should be pointed out at the very beginning that these leaders do not speak for all the members of the A. F. of L. when they argue against independent political action. In New Bedford, Mass., the textile workers and others have established the New Bedford Labor Party, which in the last election placed five members on the New Bedford City Council and polled 12,000 votes for its candidate for Congress. Thirty-one A. F. of L. unions are in the membership of the New Bedford Labor Party. The A. F. of L. unions in Niagara Falls, N. Y., under the lead of the Central Labor Union, have organized a labor party and are putting an independent ticket in the field in the elections this fall. The rayon workers of Elizabethton, Tenn. wired greetings to a recent convention of the Socialist Party and stated that they had learned out of their great strike last Spring, that they needed to mobilize their political strength in a labor party as well as their economic strength in an industrial union. In Kenosha, Wis. workers organized politically to remove enemies of organized labor from office. Reading, Pa. is under a Socialist administration which has the cooperation and support of the A. F. of L. unions of that city. A Socialist is mayor of Milwaukee and there is an effective Socialist group in the Wisconsin legislature. A Farmer-Labor party still functions in Minnesota. Tens of thousands of workers in New York City, Milwaukee and other important centers vote the Socialist ticket.

### No Entangling Alliances

A peculiarly interesting incident occurred a few weeks ago. John J. Casey, the president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, a congressman from Luzerne County, Pa. having died, his widow sought to win her husband's seat in Congress. Her defeat, coming as it did at the same time as the British labor

victory, aroused the members of the Non-Partisan Labor League of Luzerne County "in favor of separate political action by labor without any entangling alliances with either of the dominant parties."

THE LABOR NEWS, official organ of the Wilkes Barre Central Labor Union and of District No. 1, United Mine Workers of America (A. F. of L. organizations) remarked editorially: "The sweeping victory of the British labor party has won many converts to the side of those favoring the formation of a similar party in this country. Certain it is that the non-partisan policy of the American Federation of Labor has failed to produce results, and the conviction is increasing among the rank and file that labor could be no worse off under any other policy or no policy at all."

The Conference for Progressive Labor Action agrees with the leaders of District No. 1 and the Central Labor Union of Wilkes Barre. We believe that the non-partisan political policy of the A. F. of L. should be scrapped and that the unions should cooperate in the building of an independent party of the workers in industry, agriculture and all professions. Here are some of the reasons:

### Political Bluffing

1. *The Non-Partisan policy is a confession of weakness and helps to perpetuate the weakness of labor.* Advocates of the non-partisan policy frequently assert that if labor had its own party it would poll but a few votes and so its weakness would be exposed to the eyes of its enemies, whereas under the non-partisan policy it is never known just how many votes labor can swing, and it can, therefore, hold a threat of unknown magnitude over its enemies in any election. This dodge might work occasionally here or there, but it is plain on the face of it that if labor is afraid to organize its own political party because it would thus expose its weakness, its enemies are not going to be blissfully ignorant of its weakness; are, in fact, going to be constantly reminded of it by labor's hesitation in mobilizing its political strength, and are going to call labor's bluff as the Democratic and Republican politicians have repeatedly done, calmly ignoring labor's demands and threats.

The time and energy spent on campaigns under the non-partisan policy at best result in the passage of a labor measure here or there, but it leaves labor in city councils, state legislatures and the national congress without a distinct labor group with a fighting labor policy, without a group of which labor can say: "We put them there. They are subject to our instructions. They have got to report to us and to no other agency." The same time and energy put into building a labor party would give labor its own political instrument, would serve mightily to strengthen the trade unions



and would give labor two legs to walk on instead of one.

2. *The non-partisan policy divides the ranks and the mind of labor.* Defenders of the policy contend that workers can be kept united in the unions only by keeping politics out of the unions, by letting members vote as they please, and that partisan politics have contributed to the destruction of trade union organizations which preceded the American Federation of Labor, such as the National Labor Union and the Knights of Labor. The way in which these organizations handled political affairs may have had something to do with their difficulties, but no intelligent student of labor history would for a moment assert that this was the fundamental factor in their dissolution. In all other important industrial countries unions flourish side by side with labor parties. Americans must be strange animals if here only the combination would not work.

Is there any evidence that the A. F. of L. with its non-partisan policy is any less subject to internal dissensions than the movement of other lands? Is it not just barely possible that many other countries have three or four times as many workers organized in trade unions in proportion to the employed population as the United States, because they bring workers together in a solid organization on the political as well as the trade union field?

By what logic can it be proved that you unite workers, prevent them from falling apart, when in the shop you tell them to stand together against their exploiters, but at the ballot-box you tell them to fall apart and vote for a man put up by Republican bosses or for a man put up by the Democratic bosses, both of whom are subservient to the interests of employers, big business and the banks? The fact of the matter is that under the non-partisan policy politics are not kept out of the unions, but labor is kept from having its interests effectively represented in politics.

### Exposed as a Fraud

3. *The non-partisan policy is a fraud because at critical times it breaks to pieces and the A. F. of L. cannot or dare not go through with its own policy.* In 1924 the A. F. of L. endorsed La Follette and Wheeler running on an independent ticket though not as candidate of a labor party. On the eve of the election the Executive Committee of the important Central Trades and Labor Council of Greater New York and vicinity issued a statement in favor of Davis, the Democratic and Wall Street candidate. In 1928 Al Smith was running on the Democratic ticket. Al Smith was generally regarded as the best "friend" labor had had in a prominent public position in this country in years. Did the A. F. of L. carry through the logic of its non-partisan policy and endorse its friend Al? It did not. It was afraid of incurring the ill-will of a Republican administration if Hoover should be elected, and neither did it dare to alienate certain union members, and especially prominent union officials who were Republicans. A splendid example of the courage and unity of labor!

4. *The non-partisan policy in practice becomes the*

## WHY NOT A LABOR PARTY?



Labor's status, according to Chicago Federation News' cartoonist. And William Green says, "We are free!"

most corrupt, debasing and ridiculous partisanship in many cities and states. In New York City the trade unions under the leadership of the Central Trades and Labor Council, have been for years a tail to the Tammany Democratic machine kite. James Oneal has recently pointed out to what a pass labor's alliance with the Republican machine in Illinois has reduced it. "In Illinois organized labor followed the non-partisan policy in the primaries of April 1928. Louis L. Emmerson, candidate for governor, Otis F. Glenn for U. S. Senator and Frank O. Lowden, presidential candidate, represented one Republican faction. Emmerson has favored a state constabulary; Lowden maintains a company union for pullman porters who are fighting to establish their own union. The other Republican faction included Mayor Thompson, Attorney Robert Crowe, Len Small and Frank Smith. Smith was ousted from the U. S. Senate; Small had a bad record as a former state treasurer. The hurling of bombs by these factions for control of city and state is an old story. The non-partisan policy of organized labor compelled it to choose "friends!" It sided with the second faction chiefly!"

In Philadelphia and many other places in Pennsylvania, the unions are a tail to the kite of the Republican machine, and they have the privilege occasionally of choosing to support a candidate of the Grundy-Mellon wing or of the Vare wing of that machine. The PHILADELPHIA LABOR UNION RECORD in an editorial supporting the non-partisan political policy is compelled to admit that "the situation is often difficult, as in the present primary struggle now going on in this city."



Labor not having a party of its own, may vote in the Republican primaries for candidates either of the regular Vare organization or candidates of the "independent" wing of the Republican party. And what have these "friends" done for labor that warrants taking the trouble to go to the primaries to support them? Listen to the LABOR UNION RECORD, a supporter, as we have said, of the non-partisan policy, though by no means reactionary in its general alignment. "By and large the regular Republicans have in the past been fairly friendly toward labor, but lately have done little or nothing and have even omitted to promise anything. And what of the independents represented by the Republican League? What do they mean to labor? What do they offer that is of interest to us? Nothing whatever—not even the pretense of something."

Little wonder that the LABOR UNION RECORD, despite its earnest effort to continue its support of the nonpartisan policy, is forced to exclaim: "Perhaps we have earned this insult by failing to make ourselves heard and taking a strong stand."

### Prosperity Argument

5. *The use of American prosperity as an argument against independent political action illustrates the utter bankruptcy of labor ideas and idealism into which the present leadership has fallen.* President Green in a recent article in the NEW YORK TIMES sings the praises of American prosperity like any good Rotarian or Chamber of Commerce secretary. He boasts that a study in a typical community showed that 29 per cent of the automobiles "were owned by laborers, firemen, artisans and motormen. Since 1913, 11,000,000 bathtubs have been installed in the United States." Surely, this is queer and dangerous language for the President of the A. F. of L.

If his premise of the prosperity of the American worker is granted, then it follows that the American worker does not need a trade union any more than he needs a labor party. Look how prosperous he is without them. With only 12 per cent of him organized into unions, as compared with 35 or 50 per cent in other countries! This is exactly, of course, what all the open shoppers and company unionists are always dinning into the ears of Henry Dubb and wife.

Surely the president of the A. F. of L. could be engaged in a more appropriate occupation. If Ameri-

can natural resources and advantages give the American worker a relatively high wage standard, why not say that rather than leave the impression that American workers get higher wages than British workers because the former have not been so foolish as to build a labor party? That is almost as good as the stock Republican argument that the farmer's crops are good because there is a Republican in the White House.

Why not raise the pertinent question as to whether the American worker gets a fair share of the national income, considering the speed-up system under which he works, etc., and whether he might not get a bigger share if through a labor party he had more to say about taxation, and about whether the power trust is to corner our water power sites?

Why not talk about Southern textile workers who

slave 12 hours a day for \$10 to \$20 per week; about the plight in which the worker over 40 looking for a job finds himself; about the almost total lack of provision against the hazards of unemployment, sickness and old age under which American workers labor; about the fact that only 12 per cent of American workers are in unions and so have something like adequate protection for such standards as they happen for the moment to enjoy? And about the possible bearing of a labor party on such problems as these, which characterize the era of Hoover, hootch and prosperity?

Other arguments sometimes advanced in support of the non-partisan policy are almost as nonsensical as the one just mentioned. For example, the A. F. of L.'s Labor Day message refers to 130 members of the House of Representatives

(out of 435) and 39 members of the Senate (out of 96) who have legislative records of 100 per cent on measures of interest to labor, and comments that when it is known "it will be admitted that our political activities have been effective." Leaving out of consideration the fact that tabulating votes on individual bills is an utterly inadequate yardstick by which to determine a legislator's friendship to labor, and the fact that save in very exceptional instances these legislators belong to capitalistic parties whose dictates they must follow at all critical times, by what process of mathematical reasoning is it established that labor is in a strong position when it has 130 members out of 435 in one house and 39 out of 96 in the other house of the national legisla-

### WE WANT A LABOR PARTY

To get rid of injunctions, injunction judges and yellow-dog contracts, and to get rid of them for keeps;

To keep police, militia and U. S. marshals from being used against workers in strikes;

To provide a complete system of social insurance against the hazards of unemployment, sickness and old age;

To control taxation so as to bring about a fairer distribution of the huge income of the richest country in the world;

To prevent the power trust and the banks from establishing an autocratic control over our economic existence and all the agencies of education and propaganda;

To give labor an effective instrument to put an end to imperialism, militarism and war;

To unite workers solidly on the political as well as the economic field and so to give them a new sense of power, new enthusiasm and new determination to build a better world.



ture? That the whole thing is ridiculous is indicated in this very Labor Day message which goes on in the next sentence to refer to the still rampant injunction evil, which is as good an illustration as could be found of how little labor has accomplished in the legislative field.

### "Rugged Individualism"

6. *The non-partisan policy is based on a philosophy that is hopelessly out of date.* It is the philosophy of individualism, the theory that government must simply keep citizens from beating each other up, and for the rest, must let them go about their business, and that under this plan of let alone, the greatest good for the greatest number will be secured.

Big business always proclaims its belief in this "theory of rugged individualism." It might be a fine theory if big business itself practiced it, but while it insists that the government must not interfere with it or intervene on behalf of the worker or of labor organizations, it actually has the A. F. of L., to use its own language, warning against "the threat of state invasion of industrial life" and opposing the establishment of "state regulatory powers" to achieve "reform and deliverance from evil" for the workers.

Big business itself is always calling on government to aid it with tariffs, bounties, special taxation and subsidies through the national government, or states and municipalities, and by issuing injunctions and using police, militia and U. S. marshals against labor in strikes.

Commenting on this myth of individualism, which has certain labor leaders hypnotized, an authority has recently pointed out "without any warrant in our history, it is declared that our successful men have always relied on 'individual' initiative unaided by government support. It is pure myth. Finance, commerce, shipping, slave holding, land speculation, manufactures and railroads are all important interests that have used the state and national legislative powers."

Labor in this country thinks it would be "paternalism" if the government were to provide social insurance for the workers, and so leaves it to the welfare departments of company unions to provide these services and thus forestall the growth of bona-fide trade unionism. The unions cannot possibly provide any substitute for these welfare schemes but government could, if labor had not been hypnotized by big business into the notion that it must not use government (its own government, mind you) for "reform and deliverance from evil." Thus, it produces in the members of company unions, a fine crop of "rugged individualists."

7. *The stock arguments against independent political action are utterly inconclusive.* President Green in his NEW YORK TIMES article points out that whereas Great Britain has for a good while been an industrial country, we have a country which has been thinly settled and agricultural; where free land and opportunity were for long accessible; where, moreover, workers have been divided by barriers of race, language and nationality. Granted. But observe:

a. The fact that we were an agricultural country, etc., also made it difficult to organize workers into trade unions. The A. F. of L. rightly argued, however, that the effort must be made, however difficult. The same holds for the effort to organize workers on the political field.

b. In many instances foreign language groups might have been organized for political action more readily than into trade unions, and if they had been brought together into a labor party instead of being drawn in by Democrat and Republican ward-healers, this would have led to organization on the economic field. Witness the contribution made by Socialist party activities and the Socialist party press to the organization of the garment trades' unions in New York City and elsewhere.

c. If the fact that this has been an agricultural country, etc., has militated against labor political action in the past, then we ought now to be reaching the period when independent political action is indicated as necessary and feasible because we are rapidly becoming industrialized.

8. *The existence of a labor party, even while small, would get more for labor out of the politicians and the old parties than the non-partisan policy does.* Labor could hardly get less than at present. Take an instance of what trade unionists get on a matter of very practical immediate concern, under the non-partisan policy. Labor in New York City, as we have seen, has faithfully served the Democratic machine. What has that machine done to see that the law about the prevailing rate of wages is observed? "For at least eight years, going well back into the Hyman administration, there has been a continual charge that contractors working for the city of New York had openly and flagrantly disregarded the prevailing rate of wages' law. Hyman refused to act. The Walker administration has never acted. Indeed, the course of the administration in dealing summarily with its own engineers who demanded the rate of pay once voted them on paper, gives color to the belief that the Tammany politicians don't mind how much their contractor friends get out of the workers, even if they don't split up with them. It has been estimated that workers lose about \$4,000,000 in wages on this violation of the law, and it is altogether too probable that contractors use this \$4,000,000 to grease the hands of the right politicians." Give your imagination play, dear reader, and contemplate what the workers of the United States might accomplish if that \$4,000,000 were put into the building of a labor party.

### A Threat That Gets Results

The threat of independent political action will bring the politicians of the old parties to time much more quickly than anything else. Instance after instance could be cited in support of this contention. Legislation protecting funds of the unions was quickly secured in Great Britain when the labor movement organized its own political party and in 1906 put some labor men



in Parliament, though it was only 19 out of more than 400. The working men's parties of the 1820's and 1830's in this country were largely influential in getting the public school system established, even though they were weak and presently went out of existence altogether. It is notorious that the threat of independent political action in the La Follette campaign in 1924 brought the politicians of the United States Senate and the managers of the railroads to time and led them to placate the railroad workers by putting the Railroad Labor Board out of business.

9. *A labor party will cause legislation giving the unions and their activities, including striking and peaceful picketing, a legal status and will secure these gains by keeping injunction judges off the bench and corporation-owned executives out of public office. In no other way will the unions free themselves from the perilous position in which they now are, overcome the menace of company unionism and get real freedom of action.*

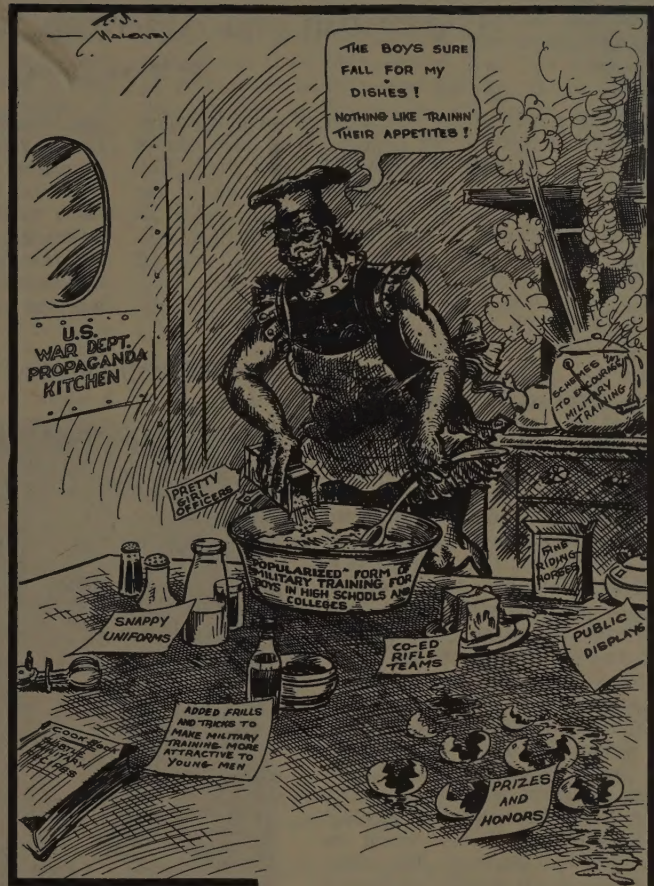
President Green admits that the British unions gained legal recognition and standing through the British labor party. He proceeds to argue that the A. F. of L. did the same by means of non-partisan political action, by securing the passage of the Clayton act. President Green knows very well, however, that the Clayton act in practice, because of court decisions, etc., proved a scrap of paper, so he makes a curious argument. "That the Clayton act has not been found adequate is quite outside this discussion of political tactics. The important thing is that we have developed an effective method of meeting our political needs." Just how effective can a method be said to be which in the case under discussion has accomplished absolutely nothing?

The anthracite miners speak the real sentiments of American labor when they say "We want a labor party."

We want a labor party:

To get rid of injunctions, injunction judges and yellow-dog contracts, and to get rid of them for keeps; to keep police, militia and U. S. marshals from being used against workers in strikes; to provide a complete system of social insurance against the hazards of unemployment, sickness and old age; to control taxation so as to bring about a fairer distribution of the huge income of the richest country in the world; to prevent the power trust and the banks from establishing an autocratic control over our economic existence and all the agencies of education and propaganda; to give labor an effective instrument to put an end to imperialism, militarism and war; to unite workers

## HELL'S BROTH



Striking anti-militaristic cartoon in Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen's magazine. A labor party could be depended upon consistently to oppose war.

solidly on the political as well as the economic field and so to give them a new sense of power, new enthusiasm and new determination to build a better world.

Well has it been said by the LABOR NEWS of Wilkes Barre that "a non-partisan policy is after all a negative policy. It lacks the appeal to the voter that is necessary to produce solidarity and cohesion of all its elements. Voters will be enthusiastic Republicans or intense Democrats but at best they will be only lukewarm non-partisans."

Let the American Federation of Labor give the lead. Let us begin to build solidly up from the bottom, on however small a scale at the outset, an independent party of labor, and all the liberal and honest elements in the nation will rally to the A. F. of L. as they have not done in many a day, and the slogan of "double the membership" will be translated into reality.



# Can British Labor Teach Us?

## *The British and American Scenes Compared*

By MARK STARR

**I**N the matter of the formation of an independent political party in the United States there can be no easy imitation of the British Labor Party. One hears inflated hopes and rash analogies, as in the first days of the Soviets in Russia, which ignore the differences between the British and the American situations. However, it is inevitable that the spot light will turn for some while upon the doings of the Labor Government and Progressives in this country need to understand both its strength and weakness.

So far, there seem to be more items to the credit than to the debit side of the Labor Government account. It is true that the fine tradition of England, as the home of Mazzini, Marx and Kropotkin and other political exiles, was departed from when Trotsky was refused an entry permit. Further, it looks as if nothing will be done to resume diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia until Parliament again meets two months hence; and the references to Third International propaganda seem to be too much in the tone adopted in the provisional letter written by MacDonald in 1924 on the presumption that the Zinoviev document was not a forgery. The British Foreign Office was also silent when the Chinese seized the Far Eastern Railway. The abandonment of the election declaration of "freedom of the seas;" the relative failure in the textile crisis when the watered capital and the need of reorganization in the textile industry could have been exposed by a strong Commission before any wage-cut was accepted; the continuance of the trial at Meerut (India) without a jury of the labor and youth movement officials arrested for disturbances—these, too, are on the debit side.

To its credit the Labor Government has in its foreign policy: the dismissal of Lloyd and definite proposals for self-government in Egypt; the ratification of the Washington convention for a legal working day of eight hours; the greater recognition given to the League of Nations and the adoption of arbitration for settling national disputes; the gesture towards effective disarmament by suspending work on two cruisers, cancellation of several submarine contracts and a slowing down of other construction work in the dockyards and the discussions between MacDonald, Dawes

and Hoover; and the expediting of the withdrawal of British troops from the Rhur and the possibility of arranging a future mutual cancellation of war debts.

In the five weeks of Parliament steps were also taken to tackle the home situation. The various departments, of course, can do much in administration to improve matters without any discussions in the House of Commons unless their actions are challenged. Such was the restoration by Trevelyan of the victimized

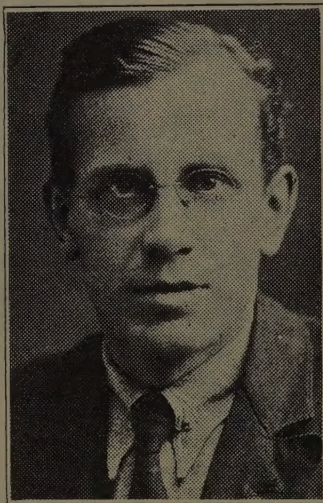
teacher, John Towers, to his old position; the postponement of the reduction due in the Civil Service bonus, which meant about \$4,000,000 in wages for the workers affected; the junking of two acts directed to take the street-cars from the London County Council and to put them in the grip of the Traffic Trust. Although apparently too timorous to put it into the King's speech program, the Labor Cabinet was influenced sufficiently by its Left wing supporters and educationalists generally to raise the school leaving age to 15 with adequate maintenance grants, which proposal will operate in April, 1931. There has been an extension of the Wheatley housing subsidy to build houses "to let." The dictators, who had been put in by Neville Chamberlain to supersede some local Poor Law Guardians, suspected of being too generous to those guilty of the crime of poverty, have been removed. Practically immediate schemes for absorbing the unemployed have been put in operation and credit assistance provided for

colonial and foreign trade and public works with safeguarding clauses on the observance of trade union standards. Reduction of miners' hours and widows' pensions are matters for which legislation at an early date is promised. Safeguarding, a current euphemism for higher tariffs, has been emphatically rejected by the new Parliament and the striking British unity in support of Snowden's recent "financial nationalism" in the allocation of the Young Plan payments will end abruptly when he introduces his taxation proposals next Spring.

### **A Good Beginning**

Naturally, lacking a clear majority, the Labor Government has not made-over the world in a few weeks. Much of its activity is ambulance work for the casual-

### **BROOKWOOD INSTRUCTOR**



MARK STARR



ties of the capitalist system. If the streams of foreign investments continue uncontrolled, all the peace talk will avail little. Britain will continue to spend \$1,000 a minute on armaments and 60 cents a minute on the support of the League of Nations. Cruisers and dreadnoughts will be scrapped partially because more terrible means of destruction have made them out of date. Nevertheless, a beginning has been made worthy of notice by other sections of the Labor Movement without the aid of which British Labor can never fully succeed.

The comparative size of the United States is the most obvious difference between this country and Britain, because the former is some 40 times greater in area with a population nearly three times as big. Aviators are bringing the East and West coasts within 48 hours of travel between each other but there is still a vast diversity in climate, in language, in race, industrial habits and outlook to be found in this continental area. If in response to the United States tariffs a United States of Europe were set up then a Labor Party endeavoring to become European would have a somewhat similar task to the one facing Progressives in the United States. The gestation of an elephant is slower than that of a mouse.

### Unskilled Workers Compel Change

It is commonly recognized that, until the distribution of free land, American development paralleled in many ways the workers' struggles in Great Britain. But the mental outlook of the British "model unions" ossified in the craft unions led by Gompers, although in Britain even the craft unionists changed their opinions as the grand area of expansion for British capitalists came to an end and large masses of unskilled workers were organized and became an important element in the British Trades Union Congress as the Nineteenth Century came to a close. Those masses of unskilled workers needed the help of laws to safeguard and improve their standards of life. It only needed the judicial attacks of the capitalist courts (notably the Taff-Vale Judgment, 1900) to convince the unions that the tactic of independent political action was necessary. The Independent Labor Party was the socialist ginger group in the unions which focussed attention upon this point. It rejected the Fabian Society's permeation of the old parties and the dogmatism and impossibilism of the Social Democratic Federation and, while Keir Hardie and his colleagues never doubted that Socialism must be the ultimate goal of Labor, they were prepared to form a Labor Party to tackle immediate reforms. The breakdown of capitalism combined with effective propaganda did the rest. Capitalists in Britain have neither the intelligence or the resources to combat the Labor advance effectively.

In comparison Socialism in this country, has remained largely an import. The Germans in Milwaukee, the Pennsylvania Dutch in Reading and the cosmopolitan clothing workers of New York and Chicago have

transported ideas gained in another set of conditions. Even they are considerably influenced by the outlook of individualism natural to a richly endowed country in which only recently the last frontier has been broken down. What is the excessive modern speculation but a continuance of the old gold rush days? The lucky strike of gold or oil which turned the rags of the morning into the silks of the evening still colors the general imagination. There are still many prizes in the lottery of success. Prosperity may be for many only a state of mind but it is meanwhile, nevertheless, an effective determinant of behavior. Prosperity may be as patchy as prohibition in many areas but the man who is not yet prosperous still expects to get his share. For some years yet the workers, particularly the skilled organized groups, are likely to benefit by the expansion of American capitalism. Such groups will not be warmly interested in organizing the unskilled, the women and the Negroes or in forming a political party.

In addition to these big fundamental differences, there are others which will have to be faced. Political rights in Britain were wrested from a feudal and aristocratic caste and, therefore, are valued more highly. The Tory and Liberal Party machines had and have secret funds filled by the sale of honors and titles, but that is a tiny matter compared to the way in which American Big Business makes the constitution look like a cat run over in a busy street and "politician" synonymous with "crook." MacDonald will have a great deal of general support for his proposed investigation into party funds but the distribution of spoils to the victors, the huge mass of vested interests which make the Republican and the Democratic parties so strong do not arouse indignation in the United States as yet. Further, as experience has already proved the system of checks and balances composed by State legislatures, Congress, Senate, President and Supreme Court make it exceedingly difficult to get things done.

### National Movement In Sight

Yet none of these differences are insuperable obstacles. Already in some towns local parties are being formed which will make the foundations of a nationwide movement. In the Labor Bureau, the Rand School, the League for Industrial Democracy, in Brookwood and the educational groups centering around it there are ample resources for criticism of capitalism and for construction of a new social order. These and other groups contain men and women who combine the knowledge of a Sidney Webb with the literary power of a Bernard Shaw. The study groups and classes will provide the intellectual workers who as members of unions in the branch and on the job will combine idealism with realism—practical tactics and immediate reforms with the ultimate aim of a new social order. Membership in, and active work for, the Conference for Progressive Labor Action to ginger up the existing Labor Movement and keep it spread, is the first necessary step.



# The New Poison Gas

## High-Pressure Myth Making

By McALISTER COLEMAN

IF what Stuart Chase and Will Irwin and others who have prophesied about the next war come true, we all of us face the prospect of being wiped most expeditiously off the map by new forms of gases far more effective than any used in the late unpleasantness.

Fortunately we are so constituted that we can read Chase's account of the "Two Hour War" in his new book "Men and Machines" without going crazy on the spot as any really sensitive person might be expected to do. We read how all our civilization will be puffed out from the clouds and console ourselves with the thought that our individual extinction will be the common lot. In universal misery there is plenty of company.

It is with no such complacency, however, that we look on the new poison gas of The New Capitalism now being distributed over the world of labor in the form of printer's ink. Definitely we have in mind such books as "Making Everybody Rich—Industry's New Goal," by Javits and Wood; "The American Omen" by Garrett and other hymnals of the Company Unions and such advertising as that of the Pennsylvania Railroad and TRUE STORY MAGAZINE. For this gas is definitely directed not at the community as a whole but rather at certain groups of skilled workers, the very "cream of labor" on whose conscious activities the movement must to a large degree depend. If this gas succeeds in befuddling these workers, as it has apparently succeeded thus far, then Company Unionism with all its attendant hypocrisies and exploitation wins an outstanding victory.

### A Publication Miracle

This new gas is as innocent-appearing, pleasantly disguised and deadly as any that is now being devised in the laboratories of the war-minded chemists. Take, for example, the TRUE STORY MAGAZINE brand. TRUE STORY MAGAZINE has been rightfully regarded as a publication miracle. It is read month after month by literally millions of people from coast to coast. Especially in small towns is the arrival of the latest issue of TRUE STORY treated as a news event and word to that effect appears on the front pages of many a provincial paper. It is edited in the offices of the muscular Mr. McFadden, the Bernarr who made the happy discovery that you can get by with pornography if you call it "physical culture." Capitalizing this important addition to the sum of human wisdom he proceeded to spread balm in the hired man's Gilead by flooding him with photographs of attractive young women posing in the nearest of near nudity with captions announcing that this was all being done for the good life of the

kidneys. Success immediately crowned these cultural efforts and Mr. McFadden then went pioneering in a new field. Word had reached him that there was a great cross-section of America, practically virginal as far as magazine reading was concerned. Their highest literary achievements consisted in a laborious spelling out of the items listed in the Sears Roebuck catalogues. To corral these magazine mavericks TRUE STORY was brought into being and once more the McFadden cash registers sang a hallelujah chorus.

### Swallowed Wholesale

For the editing of this publication miracle a number of broken-down newspapermen somewhat the worse for liquor were gathered together and told to make some sense out of the illiterate tripe that promptly deluged the McFadden offices once it was announced that the magazine was on the lookout for "personal anecdotes taken from real life." Soon there appeared stories beginning in some such manner as, "Sitting in my cell in the jail in Oklahoma City, I wonder, dear reader, what it was that made me strangle my husband with the bed-sheets," or "This story should never have been written; but for the sake of other innocent girls who may be subjected to the temptations of studio life in Greenwich Village I am telling here, exactly as it happened, the narrow escape that I had from succumbing to the wiles of that arch-fiend Bertram, the Bolshevik."

Did they eat it? They sat up and yammered for more. Mail trucks crammed to the eaves with TRUE STORY hurtled desperately across the countryside to meet the demand of the millions for this boloney. It was a wow from the first issue. But the advertising somehow failed to keep step with the crushing circulation. TRUE STORY did not seem to be the medium for advertising the virtues of so-and-so's "Muscle Building in Ten Lessons" that the Physical Culture Magazine afforded. To be sure, its army of sucker readers might be expected to fall for the swarming correspondence courses which clutter our land with culture but most correspondence schools are notoriously poor credit. And only a limited number of lady specialists can be counted on for announcements of their astonishing success in enlarging the bust dimensions of the more scrawny.

In this dilemma it was decided to go after what is called "national advertising," i. e. the advertising of the older and better established makers of automobiles, toilet articles, cigaret lighters and similar latter-day necessities.

Which accounts for the famous "promotion" campaign now running in THE NEW YORK TIMES and other buglers for the bourgeoisie. I know not definite-



## ADVERTISING HOOEY

THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1929

That young Darrow coming to Chicago today would have rather a hard time of it finding any labor cause to espouse. He couldn't fight again for shorter hours, for higher wages, or child-labor laws, or laborers' compensation acts—all of which formed the very crux of that man's early life.

*Today, if he were to espouse the cause of labor, it would probably have to be as their financial advisor, telling them what to do with their money.*

Part of a True Story full page ad. which helps to spread company union poison gas.

ly whose hand actually typewrites the copy for these full-page advertisements but the voice is certainly the voice of our old Amherst friend Bruce Barton, the man who knows that Jesus was a leading member of the Palestine Country Club and would have been a slick ad writer himself had he been alive today. The same Bruce who press-agented Cal Coolidge into the Vice-Presidency and who is now busy humanizing that great and good man via the LADIES HOME JOURNAL and the COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE.

Mr. Barton or one of his disciples (it doesn't really matter, since these ads are so beautifully in the Barton spirit) saw in the promotion of TRUE STORY an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone. By hymning the rise to glory of the workingman (1929 model), the ad writer could acclaim the important new status achieved by the readers of TRUE STORIES and thereby indicate "purchasing power" to the prospective advertiser and at the same time put over a vast amount of the new poison gas for the benefit of his Company Union friends.

So now we are being treated to an amazing interpretation of the New Capitalism which is to the effect that Labor as such has disappeared from this best of all possible worlds and that nowadays we are all "capitalists." To be sure, we have heard rumors of this before but never has it been so flatly stated as in this series of TRUE STORY blurbs.

In these advertisements we are asked to contemplate the blissful state of the erstwhile "hand" who now rides beamingly back and forth from work in his pretty, pretty automobile, with all the time and energy in the world for the writing of pieces about his jocund life for TRUE STORY. In other and darker days when 'Gene Debs and Coxey were around this boy might have gone out on the picket line and even thrown an occasional brick and hollered "scab." But now like Mr. Dickens's Tiny Tim he cries, "God Bless Everybody,"—especially the boss, it is to be presumed—and as he sits with his expensively-clad wife on the porch of his expensive bungalow and watches his expensive children go off to their expensive finishing school, his heart beneath his expensive silk shirt palpitates with

love for all humanity and he thinks how wonderful it is that he is allowed to play the slip-horn in the Company Union band.

You see the New Capitalism has brought about the New Utopia whose glories are reflected in the articles from "workers" received in the offices of TRUE STORY. While once upon a time it may have been true that there were naughty bosses who were not as kind to their "hands" as they might have been, those days are gone forever. Today everybody in the factory is sitting pretty and things are just jim-dandy. (Kenosha, New Bedford, Detroit, Marion, Clinchfield, New Orleans and Gastonia papers please copy.) If Clarence Darrow were starting today to practice law he would find no oppressed to defend. (It must be we are mistaken when we recall Darrow's saying at a recent Federated Press dinner that the only thing left for a decent man to do was to fight and keep on fighting. He must have meant fight for the New Capitalism.)

## Drugged by Printers Ink

Now, of course these advertisements are read by hundreds and thousands of decent men and women who work hard for a meagre living, who are competent in their trades and who in most things are fairly sophisticated. The tragedy of it is that this poison gas by the sheer magic of print has a way of getting under their gas masks. Surrounded by the respectability of the eminently respectable NEW YORK TIMES, it is majestically impressive. It sounds real even to those who know from their own working day experiences that it is the worst sort of applesauce. As phony in fact as the Pennsylvania Railroad advertisements, a recent sample of which details the fun the trackwalkers have. (It seems that life for the trackwalker is one grand song inasmuch as it keeps him out in the open where it is healthy and he can tell folks where all the best fishing-holes are along the line.)

It might seem incredible that grown-up and presumably responsible people should spend good money to have such hokum set in type. A page advertisement in the NEW YORK TIMES costs more than \$1,300 an insertion. Yet there it is, brothers and sisters, gas to poison the minds of the workers against any attempts at independence, any effort to organize unions of their own choosing. More and more of it is being manufactured every day along the most up-to-date methods of mass production. Between book-covers, in the advertising pages of magazines and newspapers it permeates the industrial scene, leaving behind it the death of initiative, the destruction of individual integrity.

Progressives inside the unions and out who have any interest in restoring the labor movement to life will do well carefully to study this new poison gas and its makers. Its insidious effects upon the morale of the workers cannot be lightly dismissed. Against it we must devise defences that will stand up. But first we must understand the nature of the thing that is sapping all militancy from the rank and file and one name of that thing is Propaganda of the very sort described here.

# In the Southern Sticks

## Where Misery Stalks Unchecked

By ART SHIELDS

**W**HENEVER we visit a sawmill town or a logging camp in our southern travels we see misery. If we come to a logging camp the razorback hogs are rooting around the shacks, many of the shacks one-room boxes on stilts. Here the family lives above while the hogs root below. Sawmill villages are a little better, almost as good as the worst cotton mill towns, but not quite.

That is the housing side of the open shop in a very important basic industry employing more than a hundred thousand workers in the southern states.\* These

are the workers who cut the southern longleaf pine, that famous structural material. They work in the swamps and hew out the cypress trees, the "wood eternal" that never rots under water. They bleed out the turpentine that makes the paint that "saves the surface." They are builders of America. Their products go round the world, and they live like dogs because they have no union, not the vestige of one.

Rangy white Americans, husky Africans, dark-eyed Arcadian French, they have fought for unionism in various battles but always the gunman—that personnel worker of the lumber industry—and starvation, beat them in the end. They were beaten because their battles were isolated struggles of a backwoods' village or a few logging camps against powerful employers. The bosses helped each other through such agencies as the Southern Pine Association, but the labor movement of the country at large gave little money, little publicity and no sympathetic strikes.

Publicity might have prevented the Bogalusa massacre of 1919 when President Lum Williams of the central labor union and two other American Federation of Labor men were blown to death with buckshot, two more dying later from wounds, a total of five in all. Williams had been told he must die when he refused

a \$2,500 bribe to leave town. One lesson Bogalusa taught is that the bosses fear publicity. The strategy of the Great Southern Lumber Co. was devoted to suppressing the news. Files of the *TIMES-PICAYUNE* of New Orleans of that period say the company was greatly disturbed at the publicity it was getting—though the news stories sought to protect the company as much as possible. Great Southern wanted its victims buried in silence. Union men tell me the first attorney the widows retained to handle their damage suits against the company was crooked. One of the

ways he betrayed his clients was by ordering "no publicity."

The hey-day of later union effort in the southern woods was from 1919 to 1921. The crest of the campaign was in 1919 when the Bogalusa mill, then the largest in the United States, was organized for several months by the International Timber Workers and a group of craft unions. They all perished after the massacre.

But in other sawmill towns the unions sprang up again in the next two years, only to be quickly smashed. I have talked to several veterans of these campaigns and I find that the lumber companies had developed a standard technique. It was to beat up the leaders, run them out of town, then mop up on the rank and file remnants. Many of the

timber workers were illiterate and with their leaders gone they lost contact with the outside world, could be misled and driven back to work.

Few northern unionists knew of the reign of terror that was driving the A. F. of L. out of the southern woods. The conservative unions were being attacked with all the savagery used against the I. W. W. in the northwest. Had the national A. F. of L., with all its resources, made a burning issue of the southern lumber terror, as the radical movement of the northwest made the Centralia, there might have been a different story to tell.

How many organizers were beaten up, I don't know.

### TYPICAL SAWMILL SCENE



Photo by Shields

Log pond in foreground with workers poling logs towards inclined runway into mill in rear Louisiana Central Lumber Co. operations.

\*Over 200,000 if all timber by-product workers are included.



One gets such information piece-meal from the men themselves. The International Timber Workers can't tell now for it no longer exists. But we have talked to W. L. Donnelly and Charles Frenck, representing the Brotherhood of Carpenters and the Timber Workers, respectively, who were beaten unconscious by a company gang when they entered Sumrall, Miss., in 1920 and to John E. Winstanley, who was crippled for life in west Florida in 1921.

### Kidnap and Beat Leader

I met Winstanley in Mobile where he heads the city central body. He is still active on the ground but he can't climb ladders at his trade as painter since that Florida night when strong men laid him over a railroad track and whipped him till he fainted. They had taken him off a railroad train at the gun point, the superintendent of the St. Andrews Bay Lumber Co. directing the kidnapping. Winstanley had victoriously led a strike for the timber workers who borrowed him from Mobile. The bosses repudiated their agreement while he was away. Then as the leader was rushing back to renew the fight they kidnapped and half killed him, then whipped the rank and file in detail.

The outside labor movement raised money for Winstanley's court suits but it did not prosecute the Florida campaign again. Pity, for the Florida sawmill towns, logging and turpentine camps were hells. It was in a Florida camp—one operated by convict labor—that Martin Talbert, a young Dakotan, was whipped to death as a casual matter of job discipline some months after the Winstanley outrage. What publicity opportunities has the labor movement not lost?

There was nothing new about this violence. Sixteen or seventeen years ago an I. W. W. movement in west

### CAMP SCAVENGER



*Photo by Esther Lowell*

### NEW LIFE IN DIXIE

ONE stimulating item comes to our attention on this Labor Day: The increasing favor shown by President Thomas McMahon of the U. T. W., and Organizer Edward F. McGrady to aggressive agitation in the South. We hope that that sort of thing will be pushed along, for the re-awakening in Dixie is something that can not be lost sight of. Along with autos, aircraft, electrical apparatus and oil, the Industrial South is a key to the future control of America.

The newly created committee of 1,000 can be of much help, if it is intelligently used for Labor's good. That it is brought into being at all is a straw in the right direction. The use of the moving picture as part of the campaign is an indication that some modern methods are to be adopted. The flooding of Southern communities with educational information should be knit in with the moving picture. And above all, the creation of a real agency of relief and publicity—still unborn—is demanded by the situation.

We look forward to seeing that agency established in the near future.

Louisiana was shot out with a massacre comparable to that in Bogalusa. Bill Haywood's Book refers to it and George Speed and other old wobblies carry the details fresh in their minds.

For the last six or seven years the southern lumber workers have had no labor organization to turn to. No A. F. of L. international claims full jurisdiction in this field since the timber workers' union gave up its charter in '23. The I. W. W. has its hands more than full in the northwest. The Old Knights of Labor which lingered in west Florida till shortly before the war, Winstanley tells me, has vanished. And in another six or seven years the opportunity will be almost gone. Few stands of virgin timber will be left. Few large sawmills will still be operating. The inadequate forestration being done will bring back little sawmill work for a generation, though paper mills and other by-product plants using short growth stuff will take up part of the slack.

The labor movement must pay the price for its neglect of the timber workers. As their jobs disappear they are coming out of the cut-over lands into the cities to compete with union workers for their bread and butter. Unorganized and used to low standards of living they work cheap. President Stanley Carvin of the Gulport longshoremen tells me their last strike was beaten by men from the sticks. But the ex-timbermen are still workers, with workers' needs that may be appealed to by vigorous organization campaigns.



## THE REBIRTH OF A UNION

THE rebirth of the union—this is the phrase that was applied to the strike of the cloak makers' branch of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union this summer. It is an appropriate phrase. Once a great and militant branch of the American labor movement, the International had fallen low indeed during the past three years. In part, the chaos in the ladies' garment industry itself, resulting from style changes which drastically reduced the demand for garments, was responsible for the weak state of the union, though the weakness of the union in turn contributed to the break-down of all kinds of standards in the industry and its reduction to chaos. Among other causes for the condition into which the union had fallen was the internal strife in the union itself between "rights" and "lefts" and the utter failure of the latter to cope with their problem when they got control of the situation three years ago.

There is no question that the cloak makers' strike marked a turn in the tide. Practically unanimously the workers responded to the union's strike call. In a short time a collective agreement covering a large percentage of the industry was signed. The workers for the first time in months paid dues and initiation fees into the union—thousands of dollars in a single week. A semblance of union control is established in the shop, and that is after all the prerequisite for everything else.

Various factors contributed to this happy result, among them the fact that a considerable percentage of the manufacturers wanted some semblance of order and stability restored to an industry that had reverted to sweat-shop conditions, and knew that this stabilization could not be accomplished without a union.

After all, however, the chief reason for the rebirth of the union was that the workers who had been a prey to both cynicism and internal dissension, roused themselves and came out unitedly to fight for themselves and their organization. Bitter struggles had taught them that the union must be rebuilt. When the Communists responded last winter to the invitation to come back into the ranks by founding a dual union, the workers definitely decided that there was no salvation in that quarter. They were ready for the strike call of the International when it came. In a sense they had no alternative but to respond.

A hard road lies ahead. At best the industry will move only slowly toward order and stability. The evil of small shops which cannot be controlled, and under highly competitive conditions easily degenerate into sweat-shops, will not be

cured over night. So far as the workers are concerned, the bitterness and lack of mutual confidence engendered by the internal struggles of three or more years cannot be healed in an instant either.

Nevertheless, the foundation stone has been laid, the rebuilding of the union has begun. Certain things will have to be done as that work continues. The rebuilding has begun because leaders and workers were willing to forget differences of opinion on many points and unite on the basic essential of building an industrial union. Only if that attitude is maintained will the work go on.

The union was reborn when the workers were willing to fight again. It will grow only as their militancy, courage and enthusiasm are maintained. The International was militant in its palmy days in the past. On condition that it remain so those days may return.

Not only was the I. L. G. W. U. in its great days a militant union, but it was a pioneer in such fields as workers' education, and it was a Socialist union. Now, it is certain that the morale of the membership in the garment trades cannot be maintained, whatever may be true of workers elsewhere, unless they have the enthusiasm that comes from the sense of belonging to a great host of workers in all lands who are building a new world. In practice that means workers' education and independent political action. Furthermore, as mechanization and rationalization advance in the garment industry, the problem of displaced workers will continue to face the union. Bitter struggles will doubtless have to be waged to maintain conditions, struggles in which opposing forces will resort to injunctions, etc. In other words, the union by itself will not be able to advance or maintain the standards of the workers. It must have a voice in labor legislation and in the control of the executive machinery of government. But that means mobilizing labor strength for independent political action. Were the I. L. G. W. U. out of a mistaken sense of gratitude for help rendered by political personages and office holders, to try to become a tail to the Democratic Party kite in New York, for example, it would be surrendering the real sources of its strength and the most potent instrument of its power. Let it be, as in the golden days of its past, an ardent supporter of working class education and independent political action, and it will hold the allegiance of its membership, increase in power and prestige, and hasten the day when we shall have in America a labor movement that moves. That day is coming. Let progressive laborites put their shoulder to the wheel!

# How To Organize

## Battlefront Thoughts on Efficient Methods

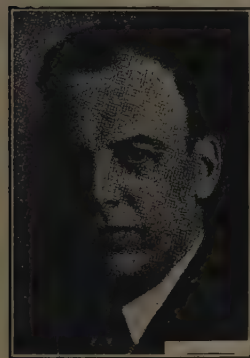
By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

### I. REVIVING MIDDLETOWN

**K**ENOSHA'S Labor Day this year is a seven-day festival. From August 27th to September 2nd, the organized workers and their friends celebrate the power and glory of Union Labor. Last

year three days were given over to this form of class-conscious rejoicing, and that had been the first time in 15 years that this day had been marked by any sort of Labor action. The rebirth of Labor Day indicates the rebirth of the local movement, after many years of dark Open Shop domination.

Kenosha Labor has come to understand that it is something worth while on its own account. It need not salaam servilely to the Big Boys, with all sorts of inferiority complexes tag-



LOUIS F. BUDENZ

ging at its heels. It need not have Chamber of Commerce officials or Manufacturers' Association executives giving it their blessing on its own festival. It has a dignity of its own, and an ability within its own ranks that should be shown off to the world.

Kenosha is about the size of Middletown, to which reference is made in our editorial columns. Prior to the hosiery workers' lockout at the Allen-A, it would have given back the same picture that Middletown has given, so far as Labor is concerned. Today we have a different portrait to draw, a portrait which would be even rosier still, had other communities nearby caught fully the revived spirit of the "Better City."

Now, the general principles which guided the awakening of this community of 48,000 souls are those which must govern all attempts to organize. Kenosha had a knock-down and drag-out industrial fight, which always brings out in intense vividness the educational possibilities of the movement. But in any effort to bring workers into the union fold, the same appeals and the same general tactics, modified to fit the occasion, can be applied.

Some few thoughts on such methods, out of battlefront experience, may be of value—if for no other purpose than to serve as a check-up on what is really effective in an organizational way. No one has a monopoly of wisdom on this matter, but there are some simple rules that pave the road to organization success and that are sorely needed in the revival of the Movement. And, as a word of caution, we are particularly

interested in the organization of the factory and mill industries, for they are the keystones which will serve to strengthen the craft unions in any community, by the mere fact that they are unionized.

### Educating the Workers

The first thought is—and it is the one we can dwell on in this article—that organizing work is educational. It is not merely getting so many men or women, at such and such dues, to join a given union. It is much more than that, making them flaming evangelists of the union message, insofar as their temperaments and intelligence will permit. That requires explaining to them in vivid terms the historical background of the unions, and the great mission that they have to perform. Kenosha is not the only example we need draw from, in proof of this. Arthur McDonnell, veteran organizer of the United Textile Workers, has just succeeded in organizing the workers in that industry almost 100 per cent in the city of Easton, Pa., in an incredibly short time. It is true, he did not have to encounter much opposition on the part of the employers. But it was not that fact that brought the workers into the union field.

McDonnell explains it very simply. "I did not try to sit up on a high-horse and hand down edicts to them. I entered into their life and their ways of thinking, and went into the story of our international and the reason for its existence, carefully and step by step. I still do that at the meetings, so that the union will be understood and how it operates and why it is. I took it for granted that they were intelligent, but that they had merely not come in contact with the organization before, and that the more they knew about it, the more would they see the need for it."

How strongly does that contrast with the tactics of some organizers, who look down upon the workers whom they are attempting to unionize and treat them as children. These men do not seem to know that such arbitrary methods are merely a disclosure of their own inability and inferiority. A man of real ability need not be proclaiming it forever to the world; an organizer who has power within himself need not attempt to show it by making himself a sort of hidden Divine Lama. A successful organizer must be primarily an educator, and the first principle of educational work is to be able to think in terms of the other fellow. The worker who understands the Movement, and looks upon it as a great deal more than as the occasion for getting an extra hunk of bread and butter, is the worker that will fight for the Movement and make it live. We must infuse such knowledge and spirit into thousands of individuals, in order to work the modern miracle of a strong unionism in America.

One of the basic difficulties experienced in organization efforts today is that the enemies of Labor have



carried on a much more widespread and intelligent "educational" activity than have the unionists. Added to their advantage of enormous economic strength, they have played up such terms as the "Open Shop" and "American Plan"; proclaiming their own slave pens, closed to unionism, to be "open" and their new slavery to be "American." Every speech that a master manufacturer hiccoughs is featured in the press, as though it were some pearl of precious price. Unions are scarcely heard of in countless local newspapers, except when they occasionally advertise, in a small paid item, that they are to meet. Middletown is repeated over and over and over, all through these United States.

### Changing the Atmosphere

Now, it is very essential for the maximum of organizing results that this atmosphere be changed. Certainly, a much different outcome will be netted by an organizer from any union stepping into a city "sold" to unionism than in a community indifferent or hostile because of a poisoning of the wells of information.

The American Federation of Labor, as a first step in effective organization methods, must set itself, therefore, to the task of local community education. It will not suffice to wait for a strike or for an organization drive by some particular union. Such haphazard efforts will not go in this age of super-efficiency. The educational work must be continuous, and a precursor to direct organization activities. The central bodies must be got in touch with, and a program of week-by-week publicity suggested to them—not in a series of "Hallelujah" letters but in a well-worked out schedule of public activities that will net notice in the local press. As practically none of the central body officials anywhere have skilled publicity experience, the publicity notices should be sent to them, all ready for release to the local press. These must not be mere statements, of course, but reports of action actually accomplished or set on foot. The central bodies must become part of the public life of the community, small as they may be in many instances.

As an example, the American Federation of Labor has been carrying on a study of unemployment. Why cannot the local central body announce its own local study of unemployment, getting assistance from the central source at Washington? That would show the unorganized workers, reading it in the press and harassed as they are by fear of job-loss, that there is a friend. It would reflect, too, on the laxity of the business groups in such an important problem. It would pave the way for agitation for unemployment insurance and the shorter work-day, these sort of things coming naturally out of the study made. But alas, there is where we stumble up against the worn-out "philosophy" of the A. F. of L. leadership. For, social insurance is not warmly received by them, even though today it be a pressing necessity. There must be a change in "philosophy," also, if results are to come in the immediate job of organizing.

For another thing: hand in hand with this suggestion is the crying need for old age pension legislation. The central body can make a study of that, all duly noted in the local press with A. F. of L. aid. out of it

to come pragmatically agitation for old age pensions granted by the State. With the Civic Federation incubus hanging around its neck, this may be a bit difficult for the A. F. of L. to do. But, for God's sake, shake off the Civic Federation, become able to stand on your own feet—and you will be able to stir the central bodies to get up on their own legs, also.

### The Ball Starts Rolling

These are but two of many suggestions that might be made—approaching the local press normally hostile to Labor, from its blind side by the consideration of questions of "public policy" and not bluntly starting off with notices about organization. By giving these items the local touch, through action by the local labor body and by announcements through the officers of such, duly named, the items become of local news interest and cannot well be ignored. They also get the central bodies started on doing something, rather than dying by slow degrees. These steps lead to others, and the ball is started rolling toward new life and effort.

Necessarily, this will require local contact and an endless stream of correspondence with central organizations. For, the general program sent out to a selected number of central bodies, will have to be followed up later with local deviations, as different local forces are met with and different receptions given the initial undertakings. That will require a specialist on the job, and it may be argued that the A. F. of L. has not the money for such an addition to its staff. But let us ask—what is the Workers Education Bureau doing, and why can it not be set to this imperative task? The countless books which it has issued, very good perhaps in themselves, have not affected the general Movement to any appreciable degree. They have done little to aid in real mass education, and nothing in community education.

We must take the word "American" and make it synonymous with the workers' struggle for freedom, as it should be indeed, not the possession of the anti-unionists and the militarists. We must be imbued with the Labor idea as a fighting, dynamic ideal—not as an apology for getting a few more cents in wages by kowtowing to our enemies. We must realize the value of Labor in itself and proceed to make that value the estimate of it by the community.

If the A. F. of L. leadership will not do this, the Progressives will have to begin to do it. Education to make Labor respected is the starting point. The central bodies must be stirred to intelligently-directed programs of activity, which are felt and noticed in the various localities in which they are situated. Where there are no central bodies, another story will be told, which will have to be taken up later. There lies in that field the necessarily helpful education work of the State Federations. With a number of communities alive to the significance and power of unionism for the public good, the effort of the organizer will be greatly lightened. He will still have many problems to face, and of those we will dwell on at least some, in later issues. But he will face these with a surer step and a lighter heart, because he has a good portion of public opinion supporting him.

# Progressive Labor's Institute

## C. P. L. A.'s Educational Conference at Brookwood

**S**URPASSING the most sanguine expectations, the four day educational Institute held at Brookwood Labor College, Katonah, N. Y., August 30 to September 2, attracted close to 150 interested friends, 40 of whom had to be turned away because of lack of accommodations. Quite a number of those present throughout the sessions were compelled to find lodgings in nearby villages. It was but another instance of the vigor, vitality and enthusiasm of the young progressive organization which sponsored this educational meet—the Conference for Progressive Labor Action.

Among those who attended were labor educators, economists, editors, organizers and union officials. They included members of the following organizations:

International Association of Machinists, International Ladies' Garment Workers, Railway Clerks, United Mine Workers, Molders, American Federation of Teachers, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Amalgamated Lithographers, Machinists' Ladies' Auxiliary, Lithographers Ladies' Auxiliary, Laundry Workers, United Textile Workers, Carpenters, Railway Carmen, Bookkeepers, Stenographers and Accountants, Brotherhood of Painters, Jewelry Workers, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, Women's Trade Union League, Socialist Party and League for Industrial Democracy.

Everyone agreed at the conclusion of the sessions that the C. P. L. A. had made another important contribution, as the lectures and discussions developed important ideas which when carried out will advance the labor movement materially.

Speakers and discussion leaders included:

Lewis Corey, economist; George Soule of "The New Republic" staff; William Bloom of New York Cloakmakers' Union; Mary W. Hillyer, organizer of Local 38, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; Tom Tippet, Director of Extension Work, Brookwood; Norman Thomas, director of the League for Industrial Democracy; Howard Y. Williams, executive secretary of the League for Independent Political Action, formerly of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party; Mark Starr of the National Council of Labor Colleges, Great Britain; A. J. Muste, chairman of the C. P. L. A.; David J. Saposs, Instructor in Trade Unionism, Brookwood; J. B. S. Hardman, editor of "Advance," organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

An entire session was devoted to reports on unionization campaigns and problems of organization participated in by Joseph Schwartz of the Jewelry Workers' Union, Philadelphia; T. F. Conroy, president of the Central Labor Union, Worcester, Mass.; George Creech, Upholstery Weavers, Philadelphia; Fred Cedarholm of the Machinists' Union, Bridgeport, Conn.; Justus Ebert of the Lithographers' Union; David J. Saposs, and others. None failed to direct attention to

the difficulties encountered in organization work, especially in view of the advance of welfare capitalism, but all agreed that they were not insurmountable, and that intelligent, energetic and courageous methods will win over millions of workers to the banner of unionism.

Perhaps the most lively discussions of the Institute followed the talks of Norman Thomas and Howard Y. Williams on the prospects for independent political action, Sunday afternoon. At the evening session chairman Muste in a notable address defined the policies of the C. P. L. A., which included the carrying on of constant, unremitting and vigorous criticism of the present A. F. of L. reactionary policies, without compromise.

"The C. P. L. A.," declared the chairman, "is anti-capitalistic. We do not accept the new capitalism any more than the old. Militant organization must proceed with unflagging energy. We must not be deterred by a capitalism that has had its face lifted.

"We believe that labor organization must be based upon the courage, solidarity and determination of the workers themselves, and not primarily upon convincing any other group.

### A Critical Opposition

"The C. P. L. A. also believes that no movement can live that is afraid of self-criticism. That is what the American labor movement needs today—a critical opposition. It needs to recognize the right of minorities to exist and function in the movement, and we have to break up the dictatorship of officialdom which has been established in recent years."

In an address which was followed closely by all present Lewis Corey at the first session on Friday evening analyzed the distribution of income in America:

"Our productive capacity," said Corey, "is sufficient to provide everybody with a decent living, but industry functions to only about 75 per cent of its capacity, largely because the wage earners do not have sufficient buying power to absorb the rest. If we did away with the gains from speculation, the manufacture of shoddy goods, and useless and predatory services, we might have even a smaller national income and still have people living more comfortably.

"The wage earners' share of the national income is 38 per cent. That is no higher than before the war and possibly even lower, though this group constitutes about 60 per cent of the population. Of the 30 000,000 wage earners, 3,000,000 receive between \$40 and \$65 a week; 11,000,000 receive \$25-40; and 16 000,000—including 7,000,000 adult men, receive less than \$25."

Corey also asserted that unorganized workers are receiving too small a share of the national income and



that Labor's chief problem today is the unionization of these groups.

George Soule spoke on capital-labor relations. The theory of high wages "discovered" by employers in 1923, which, declared the speaker, made a virtue of a necessity, and adopted by the A. F. of L. is really an old idea propounded many years ago, as he traced its history. He urged that no one should be afraid of an idea no matter where it comes from.

Mr. Soule advocated political action on the part of the workers to organize the present system, which he termed "social disorder."

He agreed with Corey that the present important job of Labor is that of organization.

"If the C. P. L. A.," said the speaker, "can bring this about it will do what no one else in the labor movement can do. The Communists cannot do it because while they are good at agitation they cannot maintain a permanent union because of their hard and fast theories, and the American Federation of Labor lacks the enthusiasm and the administrative ability to do the job."

## Points to Defeatist Attitude

The absence of labor consciousness or "morale" was the explanation offered by Norman Thomas, candidate for Mayor of New York on the Socialist ticket, for Labor's failure to establish a Labor Party. He also attributed the lack of a disciplined labor political organization in this country to a defeatist attitude which has been bred in the rank and file of the workers.

He was joined in the attack on the A. F. of L.'s non-partisan policy by Howard Y. Williams, who outlined the projected activities of his organization, which in defiance of the A. F. of L. will seek to create a third party composed of industrial and agricultural workers.

Norman Thomas in the course of his speech referred to the few crumbs which have fallen to Labor from pursuing the non-partisan policy and declared that it has placed labor in a position which makes it necessary for leaders to seek concessions through the medium of "political pull" with the police and the courts.

Mark Starr spoke on the "debts and credits" of the British Labor Party. An article based upon his address will be found elsewhere in this issue.

The South is the testing place for militant labor action, declared Tom Tippet, who has been active in the Marion strike.

"The Southern worker," he said, "does not need to have his misery explained to him. He understands his position. The environment of these workers, their separation from the so-called respectable elements have made the Southern workers class conscious and eager to make their working class strength felt.

"But the labor movement was utterly unprepared to meet the crisis which came up in the South this year," he added. "The militant mood of the workers provided an ideal situation in which organization work could be carried on, and the weak response for the comparatively meager results the strikers have to show thus far.

"The situation in the South has been adrift on a sea of complicated circumstances. The labor movement can

learn much from Marion and Elizabethton. As a whole, it presents a picture of weakness and impotence in a strategic conflict."

As though to give point to Tom Tippet's remarks came the following telegram from William Ross in charge of educational work in Marion:

"Troops surround Clinchfield and Marion mills at all highways. Martial law not declared but enforced. Wholesale arrests; excessive bail. Prisoners beaten up. Free speech prohibited. Make bail arrangements. Get expression of public opinion on State protecting companies with over twelve-hour day, violating State labor laws."

The following message prepared by the chairman was approved unanimously, and sent to Ross:

"Institute under auspices of Conference for Progressive Labor Action meeting here, including members of over twenty unions, condemns use of military wholesale arrests, brutality to prisoners and prohibition of free speech in Clinchfield and Marion. Urge strikers to stand firm, confident of justice of their cause. Disgrace of the State of North Carolina to use soldiers for the protection of companies working more than twelve hours daily and violating State Labor Laws. Getting busy on bail and relief."

David Saposs made a stirring appeal for the development of a labor culture:

"The labor movement," he said, "needs something more than strong unionism, more than shorter hours and higher wages, more than political action—important as all these are. It must develop a labor culture and esprit de corps. That intangible force that knits workers together, and regardless of any particular philosophy or lack of it, prompts them to a spirit of devotion and sacrifice that sheer materialism would never produce."

J. B. S. Hardman declared that every minority movement which has succeeded has been crusading and iconoclastic—it must not be afraid to smash idols.

## Padded Membership Figures

In response to a question as to the A. F. of L.'s claim of a 750,000 increase in membership, Saposs without mincing any words asserted that the A. F. of L.'s membership figures were padded:

"President Green of the A. F. of L. has declared that the increased figures were based upon a survey made by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics," Saposs said. "As a matter of fact, we know that the government survey was not made as a thorough investigation but merely by means of circularizing the unions through the mails and accepting at face value the figures which were returned with the questionnaires.

"The only figures available are the per capita tax reports published after the annual A. F. of L. convention at New Orleans last October. Among these there is, for example, the United Mine Workers of America, who paid in a per capita tax of 400,000 members, whereas anybody at all familiar with the labor situation knows that the organization can barely boast a membership of 200,000. An even more glaring instance is that of the United Garment Workers of America, who, with an actual membership of about 10,000, paid a head tax last year for 47,500 members."

It was also pointed out that even the padded figures available indicate that the A. F. of L. has failed to

## CHISELED DEEP



Adapted from cover page of Labor Day issue,  
Montana Labor News.

accomplish the organization of the basic industries.

The educational conference closed with a stirring appeal by chairman Muste for cooperation in the work of the C. P. L. A. A number of those present who were not yet members joined.

While the membership list continues to grow, the number who enrolled during the month of August was not quite as large as that of July, but this was to be expected, as August is the "vacation month." On the other hand, the contributions received during the past month were much larger than those of July. And among those who have enrolled lately are a number of key men and women who are only awaiting word from headquarters to form C. P. L. A. branches in their cities.

One of the most recent recruits to the C. P. L. A. is James Sullivan of Sacramento, Cal., general secretary of the Bridgemen, Iron Workers and Riggers' Union of America, an independent union with nine locals, which has been invited by the International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers (A. F. of L.) to affiliate. Its official magazine says a good word for LABOR AGE and reprints the C. P. L. A.'s Statement of Policy.

Friendly labor papers continue to give publicity to C. P. L. A. activities and statements. The MILWAUKEE LEADER in a recent leading editorial commends the C. P. L. A. and declares:

"It is a very great pity that the officials (A. F. of L.) cannot see the vital need of united progressive action and that they do not take the lead in such action."

This editorial appeared before Victor Berger, its editor, met with his unfortunate fatal accident. We are sure that had he lived he would have been a staunch supporter of the C. P. L. A., as throughout his entire career he did not hesitate to criticize with all his vigor A. F. of L. policies with which he was out of accord.

Besides a Labor Day message two other statements

were issued from C. P. L. A. headquarters during the past month. The first was a statement prepared by chairman Muste warning the New Orleans street carmen against Thomas E. Mitten as an arbitrator, who was endorsed by Secretary of Labor Davis as a "doctor of industrial policy." In plain language Muste declared that Mitten is an enemy of the trade union movement, an open shopper and a company unionist. Following the broadcasting of this statement nothing more was heard about Mitten as an arbitrator in the New Orleans situation.

### Brookwood's Moral Victory

The second statement referred to the most notable victory scored for Brookwood at the New York State Federation of Labor convention at Syracuse, N. Y., August 22. It described how Federation officials fought with their backs against the wall pleading with delegates not to "repudiate the A. F. of L." "If you carry this amendment (to refer the Brookwood case back to the Executive Committee for further study)," they said, "tonight the papers all over the country will announce in flaming headlines, 'American Federation of Labor Has Been Repudiated.'"

In the course of the discussion James M. Lynch, former president of the International Typographical Union, stated, "This Brookwood College case will not be settled until the charges against it have been definitely proved or disproved, and so far as I am concerned that has not yet been done."

The administration's mild resolution endorsing the A. F. of L.'s action carried, but not without a substantial vote in the negative.

On August 15 Clarence O. Senior, one of the first members to join the C. P. L. A., became the National Executive Secretary of the Socialist Party. During the past two years he has been doing educational work with the unions of Cleveland, O. We are confident that his energy and youthful enthusiasm—he is 26—will do much to pep up and invigorate the Socialist Party.

Among the signs of labor revival on the educational field which should be mentioned are the excellent work of the Bryn Mawr and Barnard Summer Schools and especially the two conferences for labor people and Southern liberals respectively, conducted by the Southern Summer School for Women Workers as well as the three weeks' summer session of the Young People's Labor College at Ashtabula, O., attended by 24 students. Arthur G. McDowell of Pittsburgh was the director.

A suggestion has been made which we pass on to our readers, namely, that C. P. L. A.-ers should keep headquarters informed on what is happening in their localities, from the progressive angle. Such brief reports may then be published in this magazine for the information of other members.

The National Executive Committee will meet on September 9 to consider a number of important questions, among them the fall and winter plans. These include the preparation of literature, routing of speakers, organization of local groups and regional conferences, and an intensive drive to build up the membership throughout the country.



# Labor Day Message of C. P. L. A.

IN the history of the American labor movement the year from Labor Day 1928 to Labor Day 1929 will be known as an important turning point. The post-war period marked by brutal attacks upon labor by open-shoppers, subtle undermining of organized labor by company union and welfare schemes, and in the ranks of organized labor itself by internal conflict, stagnation, retreat and defeatism is being liquidated. A new period which will be marked by a revival of militant progressivism and courage has begun.

As is natural in a period of transition, the year has presented marked contrasts. In certain respects the American labor movement has never touched lower spiritual depths than during this year. The right of a minority within the movement to exist and to seek by peaceful persuasion to advance its idea has in practice been ruthlessly denied. Criticism is met by denunciation and threats in a movement that claims to be democratic, though as Daniel Tobin, for many years a treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, has said, "A 'yes' organization or individuals who say yes to anything and everything are useless to the labor movement." No progress has been made in organizing the great basic, trusted industries of the country, and the official labor movement has taken no adequate measures to capitalize the spontaneous revolt of southern textile workers against the shameful conditions under which they have been suffering. The vote for candidates on labor tickets in the election of 1928 was pitifully small, the A. F. of L. failed to stand by its own non-partisan policy in that election by not giving an endorsement to the candidacy of Al Smith, and that organization nevertheless continues to oppose the formation of an independent labor party.

There are not wanting, however, signs that a corner has been turned. Among the workers of America there is again evident a spirit of revolt and militancy, a dissatisfaction with the share of prosperity which they are getting, with the strain of speed-up systems, with the drawing of the deadline against workers at 40 years of age or earlier and the accompanying burning up of the youth of the nation in our mechanized industries, with lack of insurance against the risks of old age unemployment, and sickness—dissatisfaction which is beginning to express itself again in action and not mere grumbling under the breath. The most sensational instance of this renewed militancy is seen of course not only in the Southern textile revolt, but in the New Orleans street-car strike, the cloak-makers strike in New York, the success of the men's clothing workers in the Philadelphia market, the strike of girls in the New Brunswick, N. J., tobacco factories, the aggressive movement of the A. F. of L. building trades unions for the five-day week, and the campaign for the six-hour day launched by some of the railroad brotherhoods are seen other striking evidences of a revival of militant union activity.

The low vote polled by candidates of working-class parties in the last election has not served to dampen ardor for the formation of a party of labor and allied interests. Determined efforts to educate workers to the necessity of such a party are being made by the Conference for Progressive Labor Action and other agencies. Labor parties have been formed or their formation is contemplated by A. F. of L. unions in New Bedford, Mass., Niagara Falls, N. Y., Elizabethton, Tenn., Kenosha, Wis., Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and other centers. The great victory of the British Labor Party has given considerable impetus to the movement and elicited congratulations from the A. F. of L. despite its own non-partisan policy.

Of very great significance is the fact that the Communists have definitely set about to build their own unions and trade union center, so that there is no shadow of an excuse of the charge that progressives and militants within the regular unions are "playing into the hands of the Communists" when they vigorously criticize official policies with which they disagree. The year has been marked therefore by the adoption of a more positive tone by those progressive elements which are out of accord not only with certain official policies but also with Communist tactics, and the formation of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action to carry on educational work among organized workers for progressive policies and by educational means to prepare the masses of unorganized workers for the organization on the trade union, political and cooperative field.

The year which begins with Labor Day 1929 will be marked by aggressive efforts to organize the workers in big industries such as automobiles and steel at the outset by developing educational groups among the young workers in these industries; by a nation-wide agitation for social insurance against the risks of sickness, unemployment and old age; by promotion of genuine labor cooperative enterprises such as housing; by laying foundations for building an American labor party; by active combatting of militaristic and imperialistic tendencies wherever they may appear in the labor movement; by insistence upon the right and duty of minorities in the labor movement to make themselves heard so that the movement may not perish of dry rot.

The American labor movement has achieved great things in the past; it has sound, virile and intelligent elements in it today. a well-rounded labor movement in all its phases, trade union, political, cooperative and educational, able to cope with the New Capitalism, the tremendous aggregations of wealth which control industry, politics and all the avenues of propaganda and education today must be built in the years to come. Let Labor Day bring to all progressive, honest militant workers a challenge to toil unitedly and untiringly to build such an American labor movement.

# A C.P.L.A. Member's Retort

## *Strong Points for Progressive Program*

**S**HORTLY after the meeting of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, Freeman Saltus, the owner of the Worcester, Mass., "Labor News," which is endorsed by the Worcester Central Labor Union, published an editorial criticism of the members of the conference, saying among other things that members of the conference were the sort who were afraid to trust the union members to make their own decisions and wanted a labor party dominated by themselves.

Mr. Saltus is an employer in the printing business as well as president of the Central Labor Union, but he is actually as progressive as most of the rank and file. I accordingly wrote him a polite letter saying that all the members of the C. L. P. A., far from being afraid to trust the average worker, had a long record of fighting for more political and industrial democracy; and that what they wanted was a Labor Party controlled, not by themselves, but by organized labor with the help, of course, of the organized farmers.

While he did not publish my letter, he wrote me a letter in reply saying he disapproved of A. J. Muste's criticism of the A. F. of L. and felt that Muste was behind the C. P. L. A. in a "desire to get back at the A. F. of L. officials." He criticized especially the stand in favor of a Labor Party.

Mr. Saltus, it should be noted, was the Democratic candidate for Congress at the last election. So I wrote him the following letter:

Mr. Freeman M. Saltus,  
17 Federal Street,  
Worcester, Mass.

Dear Brother Saltus:—

I appreciate very much your frank and keen letter about the C. P. L. A. and Mr. Muste. It is true, of course, that Muste is in the C. P. L. A., but I am sure from what I know of him and what others who have come into close contact with him tell me about him, that he would not go into the C. P. L. A. or anything else "to get back at" the A. F. of L. officials, as you put it. I am strengthened in this belief by the fact that the policies for which Muste and the other members of the C. P. L. A. stand are policies which he favored long before the recent convention of the W. E. B., so that in forming a group to work for such policies I can frankly see nothing that would indicate the mere peevishness at the action of the W. E. B. which you seem to see in it.

It seems to me pretty clear that there is fairly good ground for friends of organized labor to be worried, even badly worried, by recent tendencies in the A. F. of L. which, for want of more accurate name, I think can fairly be called tendencies toward company-unionizing the A. F. of L.

Let us cite a few of the disquieting things I mean. First, there is the agreement between Mahon, representing the street railwaymen and the Mitten interests, which makes the right to organize the workers on lines controlled or to be acquired by the Mitten interests depend-

ent on the ability of the union to be as efficient and turn out as much profit for the owners as the company union on the Mitten lines in Philadelphia is able to do.

Or take the recent agreement in Elizabethton which makes the right of workers to be taken back dependent on the decision of the personnel manager of the mill owners.

Or take the utter lack of democracy in certain unions like the Boot and Shoe Workers which recently expelled a whole local in Boston because they elected a man as business agent who was not a part of the machine of the national officials, and caused thereby a revolt of their entire membership in Boston and Chelsea.

### Stand on Old Age Pensions

Or take the fact that twenty years ago the A. F. of L. came out flatly for old age pensions and at their most recent convention favored investigating the question of old age pensions. In twenty years they have progressed backwards as far as old age pensions are concerned.

Of course they are doing nothing officially for compulsory sickness insurance or unemployment insurance. And their failure to press for and get these things has been seized on by the open shop employers to establish plant schemes and group insurance schemes for their workers as long as they are "good" (from the point of view of the employers) and that of course makes it all the harder to organize large scale industry.

Or take the fact that Mr. Green has been speaking as often lately for employers and bankers associations as he has been speaking to the workers, to say nothing of speaking over the radio of that great open shop printing and publishing concern, *Colliers*.

Or take the fact that the central labor unions have on several occasions joined the Chambers of Commerce, with the result in at least one occasion that they helped to finance their dues on industrial investigation which declared for the open shop.

Now I am a realist in such matters. If acting that way made for organization I would not object. But the fact is that the big employers have been just as antagonistic to organization as they ever were, despite all the efforts on the part of certain labor leaders to show how "good" (from the point of view of the employers) they are.

Or take Mr. Green's indorsement of the Citizens' Military Training Camps. Had I been he, the ghost of the women and children of the striking miners who were burned to death by the soldiers at Ludlow, in Colorado, when they set fire to the miners' tent colony, would haunt my dreams if I praised those camps. If it is claimed that times have changed, that the militia are no longer used against strikers, ask the strikers at Elizabethton where one man had his home bombed, and another is kidnapped right under the noses and with at least the passive connivance of the military authorities, whether that is true or no.

Finally, it seems to me pretty clear that at least some of the weakness of the unions in organizing large scale



## LABOR AGE

industry has been due to the craft union form of organization and would be remedied at least in part by a greater approach toward industrial unionism. I could cite a number of instances where that is true. It is no accident it seems to me that the union which is making the biggest and most spectacular battle at present to organize the unorganized is the United Textile Workers which is an industrial union. Mass production is making craft lines obsolete in large scale industry. Too often the persistence of the craft distinctions results in making one union in effect scab on another, as in the fight against the Albany newspaper when Major Berry's organization kept on working while the other unions were on strike. Often craft unionism has meant weakening an organization drive because only one union out of several having jurisdiction over workers in the particular plant sought to be organized engages in the organization drive.

All of these things which I have cited are things which may well give pause to the more aggressive trade unionists, and cause them to try to get such policies changed. That is what the C. P. L. A. is working for.

Regarding a Labor Party which is one of the things for which the C. P. L. A. stands, I notice that you do not deny that it would be a good thing; you only cite the difficulties. But I suggest that the difficulties in the way of a genuine non-partisan political policy for organized labor are even greater. For the non-partisan policy in fact has not prevented prominent members of organized labor from being party Democrats or Republicans through thick and thin, and has in fact resulted in sadly dividing the workers politically.

### A Democratic Partisan

Take the case of the president of the Mass. State Branch A. F. of L., Brother Cabral. When he found progress being made in New Bedford for a Labor Party and for Socialism last summer he made a speech there insisting that the political policy of the A. F. of L. is non-partisan and against a Labor Party. But he is in fact no more non-partisan than I am. For he is a member of the Democratic Committee in the city of Cambridge, and as such helps to elect Mayor Quinn, the Mass. national committeeman of the Democratic Party mayor of Cambridge. Quinn was one of those mayors who sent some of his city's police to New Bedford against the strikers last summer when the New Bedford authorities were afraid that the local police would not be sufficiently antagonistic to the strikers.

The "non-partisan" political policy divides organized labor and has brought confusion to our ranks. For example in 1919 the coal miners struck while the Democrats were in power in Washington and the Democratic Attorney General Palmer promptly slapped an injunction on them through the Federal Courts. Naturally John L. Lewis and most of the miners' leaders are Republicans. In 1922 the railroad shop crafts struck while the Republicans controlled the Federal Government, and the Republican Attorney General Daugherty got an injunction against them. Since then most of the railroad shop craft leaders have been Democrats. So we have leaders of two of the biggest groups in the A. F. of L. politically divided.

A labor party would unite those workers who for good reasons wanted to oppose the Republicans with those who

for equally good reasons wanted to oppose the Democrats, as well as the very large number, some 40 per cent of all the possible voters, who have become so disgusted with both Democrats and Republicans that today they do not vote at all.

### Financed by Big Business

The Democrats and Republicans both in their national campaign are financed openly by big business. Wm. H. Woodin, John J. Raskob, and Owen D. Young, three of the largest financial backers of the Democratic Party are all high officials of gigantic open shop anti-labor corporations. Andrew Mellon, one of the financial angels of the Republicans is the man who gave a wedding reception for his niece in Pittsburgh which cost \$1,500,000 while the miners in mines controlled by him and his brother were out on strike against a wage cut.

The man who pays the piper calls the tune in politics as in everything. So when they get elected the Democrats and Republicans pay far more attention to the interest of the capitalists than the interest of the workers. The non-partisan political policy has simply made organized labor the tail of some one else's political kite.

It is true, of course, that the Democrats and Republicans sometimes try to hide the fact that they are dominated and controlled by corporate wealth and big business open shoppers, by nominating "good men" for certain offices, just as a fruit dealer puts his best apples where the customer will see them. But we would not elect an employer as business agent of the union simply because he was a good fellow or agreed with us on prohibition. Neither should we endorse Democrats or Republicans simply because they are good fellows or agree with us on prohibition. For both the Democratic and Republican parties get their national campaign funds from the bankers and capitalists who are opponents of organized labor.

That it may be difficult to organize a Labor Party is true. But it will be difficult to organize the steel or automobile industry. Is that any good reason for not trying?

As a matter of fact, the LaFollette campaign proved that it is not as hard as it might seem. With an organization created practically overnight and with hardly any local candidates to help them the workers and farmers for LaFollette got about four and three quarter million votes. This is a larger vote and a larger proportion of the total than the British Labor Party got when it first started. This experience is a complete and conclusive answer to those who say, as you do, that it can't be done, or that the polyglot character of our population makes the task a difficult one. For immigrants and natives, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants worked shoulder to shoulder in the LaFollette Campaign.

Finally you charge that the criticism of the policies of the A. F. of L. made at the meeting of the C. P. L. A. come mostly from "those who never had to work for a living." I don't know of anyone in the conference who never had to work for a living. Nearly if not quite all of them are actual members or officials of organized labor. If you do know of any who are members of the idle rich I would be glad to have their names.

Fraternally yours,

ALFRED BAKER LEWIS.

# Research For Workers

By LOUIS STANLEY

## XVI.—A FINAL WORD

A GREAT many sources of information have been mentioned in this series but the serious research worker will soon find out that he has merely opened up the field. While some of the leading references are utilized again and again, there is no end to the number of brilliant discoveries that the investigator is continually making. Even the most experienced researchers are always coming across something new, wondering how it has escaped them so long. In this last article we shall take up a number of general references that have proven useful to other investigators.

One of the handiest of books is "New Reference Guide to Reference Books" by Isadore G. Mudge, Reference Librarian at Columbia University. It was published by the American Library Association of Chicago in 1923. A new edition is expected to be published soon. Within its 278 pages are listed some 2,100 reference books classified by subjects: periodicals, general literature, debates, dissertations, society publications, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, philosophy, religion, social sciences, science, useful arts, fine arts, literature, biography, geography, history, government documents, and bibliography. There is also added a short list of reference books and an index.

Of immense importance as a clue to numerical information is Laurence F. Schmeckebier's "The Statistical Work of the National Government" prepared for the Studies in Administration series of the Institute for Government Research. It is published by the Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Md. It costs five dollars. It gives a complete analysis of all the publications of the Federal Government as far as they deal with statistics. There are thirty-six chapters and an index, the whole volume totaling 574 pages. The index is a sure guide to the whereabouts of sometimes even the most obscure items.

Frequently one has occasion to look for the price of a book, the publisher, the exact title or the name of an author. The local library may lack the volume in question. The place to look for such information is "The United States Catalog: Books in Print, January 1, 1928" published by H. W. Wilson Company, New York City. The Editor is Mary Burnham and the Managing Editor, Carol Hurd. "The Catalog" is a large-sized volume of 3,164 pages, containing 575,000 entries. The classification is arranged according to author, title, subject. The Dewey decimal class mark, used by most libraries in the country is added. This volume is supplemented by a monthly and annual "Cumulative Book

Index," which keeps it up-to-date. This service is useful in working up bibliographies on a subject upon which you are working and obtaining a list of an author's work which are still in print. "The United States Catalog" and the supplementary "Index" are found in many libraries. Practically all booksellers have a set on hand, so that it is not difficult to gain access to this useful work. Back numbers, of course, may be found useful for certain purposes.

One of the most serviceable sources of information is often neglected by research workers through a mistaken disdain or sheer forgetfulness: the general encyclopaedias. It cannot be urged too strongly that they should be referred to upon every possible occasion. The articles are prepared with great care by authorities in their fields. On many occasions the writer has found that an encyclopaedia article was the best account of a certain subject available. Encyclopaedia articles generally have bibliographies for further reading. The various general encyclopaedias in the field have different characteristics. The most scholarly is probably the Encyclopaedia Britannica, now about to issue its twelfth edition. Stronger on American topics is the "International Encyclopaedia." Simpler and briefer is the "Encyclopaedia Americana." All these are supplemented by annual supplements. One of the encyclopaedias has a unique way of keeping abreast of the times. This is Nelson's Perpetual Loose-Leaf Encyclopaedia. Every March and October Revision Pages are published and they are inserted at the proper places in the volumes. Libraries contain at least one set of some encyclopaedia. Union offices that make any pretence at research work or exactness of information should follow their example. In passing it is well to mention that the encyclopaedias on special subjects and various dictionaries are a great help as sources of information. An unabridged dictionary is surprisingly helpful in other ways than helping you with spelling and definitions of words.

Four books are worth while referring to for your general reading. William C. Schluter's "How to Do Research Work," George A. Lundberg, "Social Research," Arthur W. Kornhauser, "How to Study," and Austin F. MacDonald, "Elements of Political Science Research," which can be bought cheaply.

## For Your Own Research

1. Find out the price, publisher, where missing, and Dewey class mark of books mentioned in this article.
2. What data has the United States Government published on prices.
3. Look up the topic "Statistics" in encyclopaedias and dictionaries.



# Flashes from the Labor World

## Troops and Injunctions at Marion

"The good old days." The gray-beards sigh for them, and the youngsters in the labor movement wonder what they must have been like. Would that there was excitement nowadays!

To this observer of the labor scene, who in the hurly burly of the I. W. W. lumber workers movement in the Pacific Northwest lived through times now described as the "good old days," it seems that such excitement is with us today. How blind or unimaginative he must be who fails to see in the Marion mill strike, the Gastonia mill workers in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, the stuff of which the "good old days" were made.

\* \* \*

Marion in itself is an epic of the labor struggle. Alfred Hoffmann, several weeks ago in "Labor's News," told of Marion, straggling along the hillside, its wretched road beds for freshets, its shacks breeding places for disease, its mills racks for the torture of bodies young and old. Hoffmann furnished the spark needed to set that typical mill town ablaze with revolt, and ablaze it has been ever since.

Did the American Federation of Labor rush relief to Marion? Don't ask. Has it seen the significance of this strike, and the possibilities apparent to everyone else, of spreading this walkout throughout Carolina? No, the Marion strike would have died aborning had it relied on the official labor movement's executives for help. Instead a group of liberals whom Chester Wright never tires labelling "Greenwich Villagers" and "intelligentsia," had to rush thousands of dollars to Marion.

This is not to say that the American labor movement is dead. In North Carolina the response to the

Marion strike was encouraging. The lower down one goes in the trade union movement, the sounder and truer beats the heart of labor. It is in the upper ranks that chairwarmers, salary-grabbers, politicians and back-scratchers are to be found.

Given the apathy of the upper ranks of the labor officialdom, why

done and the field for organizing the masses of American workers is practically open to him who wishes to break his lance on the tough hide of American capitalism. Certainly the official labor leaders will do nothing in that regard—save perhaps to oppose earnest organizing efforts.

\* \* \*

In the most notable labor trial since the Sacco-Vanzetti tragedy, the prosecution speaking in the name of the state of North Carolina, bared its class bias against the Gastonia strikers by trying to put over the ancient common law theory that all strikes are, ipsofacto conspiracies. It is curious that such a decrepit statute should be exhumed in this day and age, but North Carolina is a state of contradictions—a state of splendid concrete roads kept up by convicts in stripes chained to each other and trailing balls.

An outstanding feature of the Gastonia case is that it may happen to any labor organization in the South. In Elizabethton it was more or less miraculous that someone was not killed sooner or later, and a remarkable tribute to the self-control of the strikers. To Marion, too, came troops and provocation aplenty. Left to themselves, these hill people would hit back directly in the only way they know. There will be more Gastonias in Dixie before unionism plants its flag there.

\* \* \*

### PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZER



ALFRED HOFFMAN

Leads militant Marion strikers in spectacular struggle.

should the younger blood yearn after the "good old days." Right here and now enough work is cut out for them, enough excitement—yes, and enough persecution—to keep them busy till arteriosclerosis sets in. The work which yearns to be done is not being

the power trust bigger than the people of New Orleans? Of course, it is. Despite a well nigh universal boycott on the scab street cars, Public Service, owned and controlled in its labor policies by Electric Bond & Share, has snapped its fingers at the striking street car men. Backed loyally by

Federal Judge Borah and deputy marshals, Public Service is playing a long game, hoping finally to wear out the resistance of New Orleans to its shabby treatment of workers.

Small wonder the A. F. of L. executive council has felt constrained to call into question the divine right of private ownership, despite the affection of Pres. Mahon of the street railway men's international to that principle. Meeting in Toronto in October, the A. F. of L. will have an object lesson in public ownership when it sees the successful operation of the Ontario Hydro-Electric. Almost invariably public ownership enterprises have been friendly to unionism. The attempt to curry favor with private utilities moguls by defending their profits has brought small advantages to the New Orleans car workers. In the long run, such an alliance can only line up a pitiable small fraction of labor on the side of swollen capital against the great majority of workers and clerical people.

\* \* \*

A notable strike has been in progress in Boston and vicinity in the struggle of some 10,000 workers to gain recognition for their United Shoe Workers Union. Doggedly, without publicity, they have been fighting against a united front of employers for more than three months. Little by little that front is being broken, principally in Lynn, the birthplace of the United. This is a young union in a field notable for dual unionism. It represents a breakaway from the non-strike, compulsory arbitration policy of the Boot and Shoe Workers Union, the A. F. of L. union organization. In Haverhill the Shoe Workers Protective Union has signed an agreement with organized manufacturers which means a complete re-vamping of the union apparatus. Craft autonomy is to be scrapped and Norman Ware is placed in charge of all relations with the employers. Both the United and Protective unions work in the women's shoe industry, highly seasonal changing and marked by small order production. Another union, the Independent, is working in Brooklyn, also an important shoe center. It is a left wing organization.

\* \* \*

Prussianism in Elizabethton has

been given a serious setback in the removal of Dr. Mothwarf as dictator of the Glanzstoff-Bemberg rayon mills. The Loyal Workers company union has also fallen through and the United Textile Workers, under local leadership, are building firmly. Already 700 workers are dues-paying members. Elizabethton represents one of the few strongholds of textile unionism in all Dixie.

\* \* \*

Cemetery strikers found the \$100,000,000 tax-exempt St. Patrick's Cathedral Corp. of New York too strong. Father Dineen sorely shook the faith of some 300 Italian and Irish laborers when he appeared in the role of greedy, autocratic employer, unwilling to meet with a committee of strikers, and then deceiving them by false promises. At the New York Central Trades and Labor Council meeting, despite efforts of its Tammany officials to hush up the real facts, the representatives of the strikers made it abundantly clear that the church and the police were federated against the formation of a union and the raising of wages from \$4.50-\$5 a day to a decent level.

\* \* \*

Louis Budenz, editor of "Labor Age" and organizer of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers must be used to threats of violence by now. In Kenosha acid and threats of kidnapping and murder failed to budge him from the Allen-A workers' struggle for union. Now in eastern Pennsylvania he is warned by a city councilman that tar and feathers await him if he returns. "Which means I'll be back," said Budenz. The union is sanitating certain pestholes of yellow doggery around Easton, with the usual story of arrests, fines, jail sentences and labor spy violence.

\* \* \*

Most notable has been the victorious campaign of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in the hard-boiled anti-union Philadelphia market. At last the Amalgamated has made a dent in Quaker City factories, with one shop after another signing up. These victories, crucial if the Amalgamated is to keep a grip on the New York market, mean much to the general labor movement in Philadelphia.

There should be cooperation between the Central Labor Union and the independent Amalgamated to tear from the city of brotherly love its hateful record of low wages and open shop-perry. In New York the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has made remarkable strides since the successful cloak strike. Plans are now under way to unionize the dress trade, bringing the metropolis back to its old union reputation.

\* \* \*

The Southern Summer School for Women Workers in Industry is worthy of more than passing mention. Here 35 girls from union and non-union mills and shops came in July to hear about the labor movement. When the session had ended, 35 devoted members of the labor movement left Burnsville, N. C., to spread the message of unionism throughout the Southeast. Unhampered and unfettered, the Summer School has worked in harmony with the Southern labor movement and with the progressives from the North in training these young women to become the torchbearers of the movement. All credit is due Louise Leonard and other devoted, if somewhat unrecognized, members of the labor movement who are in charge of the school.

\* \* \*

Industrial unionists will point to what happened to Actors Equity in Hollywood as an example of the evils of craft unionism. The union movie crafts, many of them badly shaken by the inroads of talkies and machine music, could not see their way clear to support the Actors to the limit in their campaign to unionize Hollywood. And at the crucial moment Ethel Barrymore, honorary vice-president of Equity, "went bad"—probably honestly enough—and killed the union effort. Pres. Gillmore says though that Equity will return and unionize the talkie capital, in spite of the \$3,000,000,000 Will Hays-dominated producers association, which incidentally believes very strongly in organization, for itself.

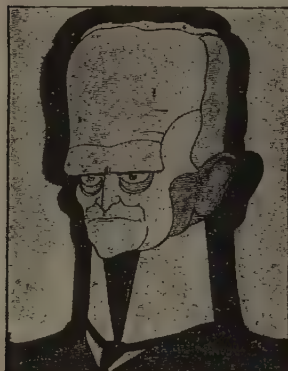
*This department prepared from Federated Press news reports by Harvey O'Connor, Eastern Bureau Manager of The Federated Press.*



# In Other Lands

## SNOWDEN'S DIPLOMACY

No new government within the past generation received the advertising the Labor Government has gotten since it came into existence. Like the previous administration of Ramsay MacDonald the present one shines



PHILIP SNOWDEN

As seen by Gal in "London New Leader."

brilliantly in foreign politics while on home affairs it is almost in a state of eclipse. MacDonald has managed, even if not deliberately, to sidetrack the attention of his public from the industrial and social mess at home to the experiment stations of the Hague and Geneva where capitalist internationalism is being blended with the chemicals of the post-war offal.

Philip Snowden played the bull in a china shop at The Hague conference on the

Young Plan. Strange to relate he managed to get a large part of his demands—twelve million pounds or so of the reparations money and the evacuation of the Rhine. He also secured a promise that reparation coal would not be sold in competition with British anthracite. This last is easier as a formula than to be carried out as a contract. If Snowden were a genuine pacifist and anti-imperialist he would advocate economies in Egypt, India and Mesopotamia. In the latter place alone the different London governments have spent over the hundred and fifty million pounds with little or no return for the money except the use of it as part of the air route to India and a place to put pipe lines to the oil fields of Persia. Two dubious and very capitalistic enterprises. MacDonald has been essaying on reduction of navies with American representatives but we should candidly say that until the Premier shows his hand and tells in plain language what he means and also if he has the support of the Lords of the Admiralty in reduction and parity his talk is meaningless.

The proposal to settle the claims of Egypt is the most hypocritical we have yet seen. In the first place the present government cannot command the support of a decent minority let alone a majority of Egyptian voters. Twice it has lost the parliamentary elections. The premier of Egypt is an usurper with the aid of London. It will not be a true and lasting settlement until a free parliament is in Cairo and a new election is held to ratify the deal. At present the Egyptian boss has no mandate to negotiate with MacDonald nor to hand him over the Sudan and the Suez Canal lands. The dismissal of Lord Lloyd is a point in MacDonald's favor.

Norman Angell said rightly that MacDonald should have gone slow on Egypt and speeded up on Russia.

In its home program the Labor Government is niggardly. As a remedy for unemployment it proposed raising the school age to 15 years. Had MacDonald made it 17 or 18 one could see a serious dent in the unemployment skein as well as raising the educational standard of over a hundred thousand youths. But it was only one year and small as it is its operation is postponed a year. As reformers MacDonald and his aides are as slow, if not slower than the Tories he so eloquently criticised when in opposition. The cotton crisis is being compromised and a small cut is in store for the weavers. As a solace for their failure to get the full 12½ per cent reduction the magnates are to be given a subsidy from the national treasury after the Baldwin fashion in the coal situation. Had the government insisted on the cotton magnates squeezing out the millions of watered stock from their bloated companies there would have been no reason for a subsidy. The coal situation is not tackled and will not be for some time.

## CHINA REMAINS OBDURATE

Russia and China are exploring the avenues that lead to peace. China is still inclined to be cocky and has a chip left on its shoulder. It does not want to give and take on the Railway question. It does not understand that the railway is essential to the economic life of Siberia and Western China's Independent provinces and Mongolia. It does not understand that petty nationalism cannot stand in the way of the life of millions of people. Of course, no one thinks for a moment that the Chang and his robber crew who have control of the government are animated by nationalistic and idealistic notions or philosophy. They are out for millions of graft or for their price from the Soviet. Manchuria or Mongolia they care little for. The Mongols in justice to them care less for the Chinese government than do any other body, group and government.

## FASCIST BRAZENNESS

Fascism continues to strangle the nation. Autocracy is growing bolder and more powerful. All signs indicate it is riding to a fall in Italy. In Spain Labor manfully declared against the Dictator and told Riviera to get out and let the country return to parliamentary institutions. The Dictator in Spain is far weaker than in Italy. Turkey and its statesmen are laughing at the troubles of the British, Arabs and Jews in Palestine. All the wise men of the East are saying to the British, "How about it?" and "Where are your promises?" The British thought they could promise the Arabs Palestine and the Jews the ancient homeland of the race and forget all about it. They are now discovering that you only fool yourself when you try to fool others. Just what the workers of Palestine of all creeds think of the troubles there can be guessed from the strikes. The same applies to India where there is a regular epidemic of strikes tempered by deportations and shootings of the leaders of the workers and the unions. Bengal is like our Southern textile zones only worse. P. L. QUINLAN.



# "Say It With Books"



## THE MACHINE STAMPEDE

Stuart Chase Challenges Us to Control It

Men and Machines. By Stuart Chase, The Macmillan Co., \$2.50.

IT is a hot summer night in a Pennsylvania hill town. There is a breeze up here, but the belching smoke of cement plants fouls the air, even as it also hides the beauties of the heights beyond. A slate maker is here at one elbow and a coal miner at another, cursing the asbestos shingle and the oil and electricity which are ruining their respective trades. A full fashioned hosiery worker sits across the way, a bit uneasy at these tirades against new mechanisms. Hitherto in a comparatively princely occupation, he too feels the pressure of the "improved" machine; and even the threat of girls, at low wages, to take his job. The little town could be lovely in its natural setting of hill and stream; it is ugly beyond measure, its narrow Main Street buildings slammed together in an atrocious mess.

In such a setting I read and re-read Stuart Chase's latest book, "Men and Machines." All around are black marks against the machine: ugliness and unemployment. Mr. Chase makes me philosophical. He takes up the case against the machine, point by point. He gives it a square shake. He finds that many of the Jeremiads concerning its evils are much exaggerated. It has not standardized men and customs as much as has been bruited about. If it has destroyed many forms of art, it has created some others. It has produced a wider desire for cleanliness and hygiene, and has added to the span of life. In itself, the balance sheet shows, the machine is a factor for good. It could also be a factor for the good life, which alas it is not.

When the balance sheet on its uses is counted up, the author discovers that the totals are all to the bad. Unemployment is not its creature, but unemployment has become a national menace out of the machine's uncontrolled use. Play has become a travesty on the happy habits of our

own youthful days, not to mention the spontaneous joy of medieval holidays. Recreation is now flat, artificial, tense. You can see that in the drawn faces on the highway, hell-bent in their machines—nowhere. It is manifest in wood alcoholism, and a thousand other ways.

Most seriously of all, in addition to unemployment, the machine has brought the most horrifying possibilities in war. The war of the future will be chemical warfare from the air, in which entire cities and their inhabitants can be wiped out in the short space of a few minutes. The machine CAN be a force for better things for men, but at the present its net tendency is into ways of evil.

To sum it up, as Chase puts it, man has unloosed a billion wild horses in these machines of his. Can he control these wild steeds, and halt their erratic and damaging stampedes? With an emotion (which he tries to discount a bit earlier) the author calls for an attempt at such control. Perhaps a super-trust might do it, he says; perhaps a technical bureaucracy, perhaps a workers' revolution. He does not pretend to supply the answer, but challenges us all to embark on this great adventure. In a modest after-thought, we make bold to say that the change must come from the workers, combined with those technicians who are as yet under the trust-makers' control. Both have freedom to win through the social harnessing of the machine. Will both have the vision to see the need for action?

With that combination of charm and fact which marks his other works, Stuart Chase makes this new product interesting as well as instructive. There are many facts, but not too many. There is a popularization in its style, without a cheapening of its thought. Even in the midst of the machine-made irritations of this industrial town in God-forsaken Pennsylvania, I can read it and re-read it and feel the urgency of a new Machine Control Crusade!

LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ.

## ANCIENT AND MODERN



Machinery drawings by W. T. Murch for "Men and Machines."



## INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION IN BRITAIN

British Industry Today, by Ben and Sylvia Selekman, Harpers.

**B**EN SELEKMAN and Sylvia Kopald Selekman have collaborated in producing a book on British Industry Today which will be very useful to officers and active workers in the labor movement, as well as to students.

The book deals with the question of relations between employers and employees in Britain since the war, describes the machinery of collective bargaining, various schemes for setting wage rates, how the so-called Whitley councils have worked out in practice, the various shop committee systems that are in effect, the extent to which company unionism has invaded the field, the working out of the unemployment insurance scheme, and the progress of the Mond-Turner conferences between certain prominent British employers and the British Trade Union Congress which have been held for the past couple of years, for the purpose of determining how employers and organized labor might cooperate in order to make British industry more efficient and improve the standards of the British workers.

The main conclusions one draws from this survey as to the present status and viewpoint of the British labor movement, in particular its trade union wing, are these:

1. The British trade union movement has been considerably weakened, but very far from crippled by the long depression, general strike, etc.

2. The government followed up the general strike by passing the Trades' Disputes and Trade Unions' Act of 1927, which constituted a pretty severe limitation on the legal status of unions. On the other hand, employers did not dare to care to enter upon any general victimization policy. It remains to be seen whether the labor government will execute its determination to change the Trades' Disputes Act.

3. For the present, the British trade union leaders, backed apparently by the membership, are determined to try out ways and means of cooperating with employers, in order to make British industry more efficient. They have rejected as futile the policy of utilizing the prevailing economic stagnation to insure the breakdown of the whole industrial machine. They have instead taken the position that they will demand a voice and influence in reconstruction on the ground that the labor movement "can find more use for an efficient industry than for a derelict one."

4. British employers are at the moment not yet so ready to try out union-management cooperation as the official labor movement.

5. If British employers hesitate very long to do their share in cooperation, the militant minority in the British unions, which doubts whether any great results can be accomplished by the present method, will either obtain the leadership and adopt more aggressive and revolutionary tactics, or will compel the present officials to adopt such tactics.

6. If the present plan succeeds, the authors point out that it will be a very significant demonstration of the

possibility of accomplishing industrial reconstruction by voluntary and democratic means, as contrasted with the method of dictatorship employed in Russia and Italy, or that of a strongly centralized state as in Germany. They hold that for this reason the success of the British experiment along these lines will have great influence on development in the United States.

From the standpoint of progressive laborism, two criticisms of this book should be noted. In the first place, the authors tend unduly to depreciate the gains labor makes by strikes, etc., and to over-estimate the possibilities of peaceful negotiation. Of course, there is some excuse for this because so often the reverse is done. As a general rule, however, labor is able to negotiate effectively only when it has fought to achieve at each stage of its progress the right and power to negotiate. It speedily loses again the chance to negotiate if it loses power. Are the authors so sure that the uncompromising and militant stand of the British miners in 1926 has not a good deal to do with the fact that prominent employers are now willing to talk peace with the Trade Union Congress as they were not previously, and are the authors not, therefore, unjust in their condemnation of the miners' tactics?

In the second place, American readers are, I think, likely to get a somewhat incorrect picture of the situation, and to draw wrong conclusions as to the soundness of so-called cooperation tactics on the part of trade unions in the United States, from the failure of the authors to emphasize sufficiently the existence and the role of the British Labor Party. The reconstruction of industry at which the cooperation plan aims, and without which there can be no real peace in British industry, can be accomplished only if government deals adequately with such questions, for example, as unemployment. The British Trade Union Congress may be in a position to experiment safely with certain forms of cooperation on the economic field simply and solely because the workers have a powerful and fighting labor party to carry on for them on the political field. The same sort of experimentation with cooperation on the part of trade unions in the absence of an effective labor political party might well be futile or have positively evil results for the workers.

A. J. MUSTE.

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## THE WAR OGRE UNMASKED

**P**ROTRUDING entrails of disemboweled men; human bodies stark naked, robbed of their clothes, stiff and cold in death lying on the battlefield or bundled into mass graves; shattered remnants of men and horses enmeshed in barb-wire entanglements; rats sleek and fat from eat-

"WAR IS HELL"



Cover illustrations of "No More War."

ing human flesh slinking in and out of trenches; horribly disfigured faces; poison gas and liquid fire to make men choke and writhe in their death agony; shell and bomb to shatter villages into mere heaps of bricks and mortar—these are the realities of war which are being so easily forgotten. "No More War" (25c from Bruno Wagner, 243 E. 84th Street, N. Y. C.) helps us to remember with its 63 pages of photographs "for adults only." For some while the International Federation of Trades Unions has been distributing E. Friedrich's well known "War on War" and now it has published this extract—"No More War" makes a most effective antidote for the meretricious glamour given to the war ogre by waving standards, martial music, faked history books, recruiting appeals and the ever-recurring press pictures of the C. M. T. C. and the R. O. T. C. If President Green visits West Point again he should distribute copies of this trade union publication to complete the education of the cadets and show war for the bloody butchery which it is. The book pictorially well supplements "All Quiet on the Western Front" and other such stories and its mordant captions are given in six languages so the future cannon fodder of at least six nations will know what alike awaits them.

However, all the fierceness of the fires of hell never successfully terrified men and women into the paths of virtue. The dupes of patriotic nationalist education and the victims of the yellow press always count on getting their blow in first and making the other fellow go west. The protective mask is always counted upon to overcome the poison gas; camouflage is relied upon to outwit the long distance gun. Maybe "the two hours fight to a finish war," now being discussed, will eliminate by a more scientific mass destruction the horrors displayed in "No More War." Therefore alongside this necessary appeal to fear there must be an understanding of the economic causes of war to clear the way for a conscious supernational organization of the workers of the world. It is the only way.

MARK STARR.

## A BOUQUET

From among the letters received in praise of "Labor Age" we present the following review of the August issue from a member of Typographical Union No. 6:

**T**HE August number of the LABOR AGE is of outstanding excellence in the annals of progressive and inspiring labor literature. From the stirring editorial calls to action to the worth-while reviews of books of unusual interest to the student of the labor movement, the issue is most attractive. The sincerest form of flattery is attested by other labor publications which have quoted freely from its contents.

The practical article by A. J. Muste suggesting methods to fight militarism was timely and valuable as was also the expose by Tucker P. Smith of the efforts made by militarists to popularize military courses in school and college. The tribute to the excellent work of the American Federation of Teachers was well-deserved and welcome.

Miss Sahler's suggestion of a shrine to the unknown worker was carefully worked out and compelled assent.

The news from the Southern labor front was satisfying and was brought right down to the date of publication. It is a tribute to the enterprise of the editorial staff of LABOR AGE, a monthly, to acknowledge the freshness of its labor news. Quinlan's comment on international development is authoritative and cannot be overlooked by those who wish to keep in touch with what is going on "over there." Justus Ebert puts us in debt by pointing out what is going on in the way of combinations in the industrial world and by showing what labor tactics should be used to combat these tendencies. Louis Stanley's articles on "Research for Workers" are also invaluable.

EDWARD P. CLARKE.

McAlister Coleman is completing a full length biography of the late Eugene V. Debs which GREENBERG-PUBLISHER will issue early in the spring.

Mr. Coleman will welcome any letters from or to Debs, authoritative anecdotes and any other interesting information concerning the great labor leader. He will copy and return promptly all material sent to him at 103 East 10th Street, New York City.

### PROGRESSIVE LABOR, WILL YOU SUPPORT ANOTHER WAR?

If your answer is NO, fill out this declaration and mail it to the War Resisters League, 171 West 12th Street, New York City, Jessie Wallace Hughan, Secretary.

I declare it to be my intention never to take part in war, offensive or defensive, international or civil, whether it be by bearing arms, making or handling munitions, voluntarily subscribing to war loans or using my labor for the purpose of setting others free for war service.

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# Vigorous Criticism

"I am glad to see you are not pulling your punches," said an eminent sociologist to an officer of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, the other day. And he added, "If the C. P. L. A. does nothing else for some time to come than to criticize vigorously the present policies of the American Federation of Labor, this alone would be a distinct contribution to social progress."

Just as it did a year ago "Labor Age" will analyze clearly the issues that are expected to come up at the A. F. of L. convention—this year at Toronto—in the October number, and will discuss convention decisions in the November issue.

"Labor Age" does not compromise with reaction. To learn the progressive viewpoint on important labor questions the reading of "Labor Age" is essential.

And this is what the "Milwaukee Leader" said editorially of the A. F. of L. attack on the C. P. L. A.

The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor has sent a special letter to local unions denouncing two Communist organizations and coupling with them the recently organized Conference for Progressive Labor Action, stigmatizing all three as hostile to the A. F. of L. and warning all members of that body not to have anything to do with them.

It is, of course, correct in saying that the Communist organizations are hostile to the A. F. of L.

But the Conference for Progressive Labor Action is made up of sincere friends of the A. F. of L., such as James H. Maurer, long-time president of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor; Louis Budenz, leader of the Kenosha hosiery strike, and Norman Thomas,

than whom no one has raised more funds to aid strikers. They do not attack the American Federation of Labor; they criticize its too conservative officials, and their criticism is constructive, for they offer practical suggestions. Such men cannot be explained away by abusing them.

Yes, the Conference for Progressive Labor Action is made up of friends of the A. F. of L.—friends who are deeply concerned for its welfare, who hate to see it stagnating, who dislike to see its officials consorting with Civic Federationists and with militarists, and who want it to meet modern problems in a modern way, matching the closed ranks of employers with closed ranks of workers. These friends are profoundly sincere in their desire to assist the American Federation of Labor to become the great organization that it ought to be.

LABOR AGE is the official organ of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action.

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